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ABSTRACT

This extensive report describes Colombian education under 86 primary subheadings in 14 chapters, as follows: 1) The national setting, 2) cultural and social influences on education, 3) educational landmarks and traditions, 4) school organization and administration, 5) planning and development, 6) preschool and elementary education, 7) public secondary system, 8) vocational education, 9) higher education, 10) teachers and their preparation, 11) private and church-sponsored education, 12) other programs related to education, 13) international and foreign educational influences, and 14) successes, problems, and prospects. Special attention is given to the country's educational history and to recent developments, including a significant effort to bring elementary education to the rural masses through ACPO, a program teaching literacy and basic life skills by radio. Another program, called ICETEX, has improved the educational offerings available to Colombian university students at home and abroad. A bibliography of over 150 items in English and Spanish is appended. [Figures 1 and 2 may reproduce poorly in hard copy due to small print.] (JK)

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# EDUCATION IN COLOMBIA

November 1968

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF  
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**Richard R. Renner**

**November 1968**

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**University of Florida  
Gainesville, Florida**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE  
OFFICE OF EDUCATION**

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## FOREWORD

For many years the U. S. Office of Education has supported studies about education in various foreign countries. These studies have provided useful data and understanding to social scientists, comparative educators, university admissions officers, U. S. residents abroad, students, professors, the Peace Corps, and various governmental and international agencies and foundations. The growing contacts of such groups with our nearest neighbor nation in South America have resulted in a strong need for up-to-date information about all phases of Colombian educational endeavor.

The most recent comprehensive survey of education in Colombia in English was prepared by John Furbay and published by the U. S. Office of Education in 1946. Since then, a wealth of objective data about educational and social conditions have been gathered by Colombians, including the results of planning studies and the 1964 census. In addition, several important new educational institutions have come into prominence, namely, ICETEX in international and higher education, Acción Cultural Popular's rural radiophonic schools, the Colombian Association of Universities, and the National Apprenticeship Service with its program to train industrial workers. In the past few years the larger universities have also begun to reshape their curricular and administrative structure concurrently with a national movement toward industrialization and urbanization. All of these factors point up the extreme importance

of a current study about education in a nation committed to rapid economic growth.

The writer's task was made immeasurably easier and more pleasant by the gracious assistance provided by Colombian officials, teachers, scholars, clergy and laymen as well as by the valuable aid rendered by the U. S. Embassy. Particularly helpful was the guidance provided by Gabriel Betancur Mejía, Minister of Education, Augusto Franco A. of the National University Fund, Gerardo Eusse Hoyos of ICETEX and Alfredo Ruiz of the Pan American Union.

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## CHAPTER 1

### THE NATIONAL SETTING

**Education is an integral aspect of most human activities.** Since educational institutions are devised by society, they reflect the values, hopes, and aspirations of the cultural and political groups which make them possible. A country's educational system cannot be understood without some familiarity with its society and with the economic and political institutions which sustain it. This is particularly true of a developing nation like Colombia, where economic growth and selective educational innovations have been accompanied by severe social and political upheavals during the past two decades. This introductory chapter, then, will describe some of the features of the country essential to an understanding of the context within which the educational system functions.

#### Geography

Colombia is the only South American republic with important coasts on two oceans. One thousand miles stretch along the Caribbean Sea and 812 miles along the Pacific Ocean. Its land area of 439,530 square miles makes it the fourth largest country in South America. Colombia is slightly larger than Texas, Mexico, and Louisiana combined, and its capital, Bogota, is one of the highest

cities in the world with an altitude of 8,661 feet. Of the 14 main population clusters, 11 are in mountain basins or valleys ranging from 3,000 to 9,000 feet; the remainder are in coastal lowlands bordering the Caribbean.

The situation is very favorable for agriculture because a multiplicity of climates permits the growth of a wide variety of crops. Efficient commercial production of rice, bananas, cotton, and sugar has developed in the plains areas of the country, while excellent dairy cattle are raised in the vicinity of the three largest cities, as well as in a few other regions. Efficient beef production has been developed on some haciendas but, in general, efficient methods of agricultural production using modern techniques are found on the farms of only the very wealthy. The predominant agricultural practices remain uneconomic and therefore provide the many small landowners or landless peasants of Colombia with but a meager existence.

Although the equator crosses southern Colombia, climate is largely a matter of altitude; some school geographies even include a list of useful climate and altitude data for the towns of every department (state). These altitude regions are typically classified as tierra fría (cold country) above 6,500 feet; tierra templada (temperate zone) between 6,500 and 3,000 feet; and tierra caliente (hot country) below 3,000 feet. High mountains separate most of the population centers, the highest peak of which is the volcano of Cumbal at 16,049 feet. Most of the sparsely settled eastern region consists of plains or jungle. Mountainous terrain in many areas had made surface transportation so difficult that an extensive

network of low-cost commercial air lines has developed. In fact, the first continuously operating commercial airline in South America was founded with German and Colombian capital in 1919. It is now possible to fly from the capital to the most distant major cities of Colombia in less than 90 minutes.

Climate and agricultural productivity vary with the elevation. Much of the 3,000-foot-high Cauca Valley near Cali is highly fertile, yielding as many as five crops a year. Sugar, tobacco, pineapples, cotton, beans, coffee, and tropical fruits are plentiful. In this region a scheme similar to the Tennessee Valley Authority to drain swamps, control floods, produce electricity, and irrigate dry areas is being developed. In the area around Bogota, cattle, wheat, barley, corn and potatoes predominate. The tierra caliente areas have year-round temperatures ranging from 75 to 80 degrees Fahrenheit, with only a three degree difference between the hottest and coldest months. From 3,000 to 6,500 feet, the temperature ranges between 65 and 70 degrees with Bogota having an average temperature of 57 degrees. Rainfall is usually ample, though there are no regular seasons common to the whole country. Dry and wet seasons tend to alternate about every three months, except in the department of Choc6 on the Pacific, where rain falls in the afternoon and evening the whole year round. Coffee grows best between 3,000 and 6,000 feet. In quality Colombian coffee is the best in the world, and in quantity of production it is second only to Brazil. Colombia is also the world's largest exporter of emeralds, and gold, platinum, petroleum, and uranium are produced here in significant quantities.

### Population

Colombia's population of 19,215,000 ranks it third in South America. Most of its inhabitants live in the western 45 percent of the country; the rest (1.3 percent) are scattered about the remaining 55 percent. Although the Spanish sought to protect their pure blood from what they felt was contamination with inferior races, racial mixture was common from the earliest days. Today racial mixing has reached the point where precise classification is impossible. Recent racial estimates vary considerably. Indians make up from 1 to 15 percent of the population; Negroes, 4 to 10 percent; mulattoes and Zambos (mixed Indian and Negro), 17 to 30 percent; mestizos (mixed white and Indian), 33 to 58 percent; and white, 10 to 25 percent.<sup>1</sup> The whites inhabit urban centers primarily, especially the cities of the highlands. Mestizos live in the same regions, but only as peasants or as recent migrants to the cities. Negroes, mulattoes, and Zambos are found principally along the coasts and in the river lowlands.

Although there are frequent exceptions, a small, predominantly urban group of whites controls the wealth of Colombia and exercises the national power. In recent years, however, these advantages have gradually been extended to the middle classes. Members of the traditional elite take a great deal of pride in their Spanish heritage. Although they may marry foreign whites, they rarely

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<sup>1</sup> Lyman H. Legters et al, U. S. Army Handbook for Colombia, Washington: Superintendent of Documents, Department of the Army Pamphlet No. 550-26, Second Edition, 1964, p. 60.

marry Colombians of lower social status. Below this group lie the vast majority of Colombians, usually of mixed racial ancestry. These people identify with national society and tend to idealize the values of the upper classes. Within this group there are also subtle racial and cultural distinctions which serve to further differentiate class status. Urban members of this group are gradually coming to regard themselves as middle class, while the rural peasant tends to see himself as having a lower status. There are also a number of Indian societies, often with their own language, which for the most part remain outside of the Hispanic national culture.<sup>2</sup>

Not only is Colombia's population growing rapidly, but its present rate of growth is one of the highest in the world, increasing from 2.2 percent annually to 3.2 percent in the 1951-1964 intercensal period. While public health campaigns have lowered mortality rates, birth rates have not diminished significantly. The nation's increasingly urban population is expected to double in the next 20 years. In 1951, 38.7 percent of the population lived in cities, but by the 1964 census this number had increased to 52.0 percent. The four principal cities of Bogota, Medellin, Cali, and Barranquilla are growing at an annual rate of 5.6 percent. Between 1960 and 1966 the school and university population increased by slightly more than a million to a total of nearly three million students. For every 100 inhabitants, 12 were in school in 1960; six years later this number increased to 16. Estimates for 1970 push the number to 18. In 1960, 17 pesos

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 61-63.

per 1,000 pesos of gross national product were devoted to education; in 1966, this ratio had reached 21 pesos per thousand.<sup>3</sup>

### The Economy

Although the gross national product increased 5.3 percent in 1966, annual per capita income in the same year was equivalent to only \$265 at 1963 prices, a figure considerably less than the average for Latin America as a whole. Between 1951 and 1964, the economically active portion of the Colombian population increased from 3,755,609 to 5,134,125. Relative trends are indicated by the following percentage comparisons:<sup>4</sup>

#### ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION

	1951	1964
Professionals, Technicians, and Related Occupations	2.3%	3.9%
Managers, Administrators, and Directors	5.7	2.6
Office Employees	2.4	4.6
Vendors	1.7	5.6
Farmers, Cattlemen, and Related Fields	53.1	47.3
Miners, Masons, etc.	1.3	0.8
Transportation Services	2.0	3.0
Manufacturing and Crafts	15.1	13.1
Other Craftsmen	--	3.2
Laborers	2.0	1.2
Personal Services	10.6	11.2
Unspecified	3.8	3.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

<sup>3</sup>Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Antecedentes y Perspectivas del Desarrollo Cuantitativo de la Educación Superior en Colombia, 1968-1975, Bogota: División de Planeación, October, 1967, p. 19.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

Most of the country's economic progress has been confined to its modern industrial component. Colombia's financial, business, and government organizations have put their main support behind high-productivity industries and generally have neglected rural and other enterprises using large amounts of unskilled labor. The high-productivity industrial sector accounts for about 80 percent of total gross national product, while employing only one-third of the total labor force. In 1963, nearly one-third of the labor force was unemployed.<sup>5</sup> Although Colombia is blessed with a vigorous class of business entrepreneurs, it does not have sufficient managerial talent in the upper and middle ranks. However, it is in much better condition than its South American neighbors. Between 1950 and 1960, industrial productivity per worker increased from an index base of 100 to 130.9, while real wages rose only to 123.4. Wage increases enacted by Congress, however, outstripped gains in productivity by means of an escalator clause which provides for wages to be reviewed at the end of each six-month period in which the cost of living has increased by more than five percent.<sup>6</sup>

Economic development in Colombia is handicapped by very difficult terrain, low agricultural efficiency, and an overdependence on the world price of its primary crop, coffee. The gross national product has shown a 5.5 percent per year growth for nearly a decade but by 1965 it slowed to 3.4 percent, although by 1966 conditions had improved sufficiently to permit renewed government investment in

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<sup>5</sup> Dieter K. Zschock, Manpower Perspective in Colombia, Princeton: Industrial Relations Section, Princeton University, 1967, pp. 122-23.

<sup>6</sup> Pat M. Holt, Colombia Today - And Tomorrow, New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964, pp. 163 and 158.

housing, communications, and other public services.<sup>7</sup> In addition, taxes have been increased and are now being collected more effectively.

In addition, certain industries have grown rapidly. In 1962, for example, steel production increased by 10 percent and cement production by 9.9 percent. In 1963, industry accounted for 18 percent of the total gross national product. The more than 400,000 stockholders listed in the Bogota Stock Exchange were more numerous than in any other Latin American country, even allowing for the fact that the names of certain families frequently recur on boards of directors. Throughout the last decade a spirit of enthusiasm for economic development has characterized the outlook of the country's leadership, and substantial progress has taken place.

Despite its emphasis on manufacturing, however, the Colombian economy is heavily dependent upon exports. In 1966 one crop alone supplied 63 percent of the value of its exports, or one-sixth of the world's supply, 66 percent of which went to one market, the United States. Coffee has been Colombia's principal source of the foreign exchange she needs for the purchase of capital goods for industrial expansion. This fact ties the country's economy to the vicissitudes of the weather and the world market variables which inevitably result in fluctuating capital for expansion. The average price of coffee fell, for example, from 48 cents, U. S., per pound in July, 1966, to 40 cents in August, 1967.

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<sup>7</sup> Inter-American Development Bank, Socio-Economic Progress in Latin America, Washington: Social Progress Trust Fund, Seventh Annual Report, 1967, February, 1968, p. 102.

The second largest export, petroleum, amounts to about 13 percent by value. The third largest export is cattle. Regarding precious metals, Colombia is the largest gold producer in South America, with most of the ore being mined in the department of Antioquia. The only platinum producer in Latin America, Colombia also furnishes 95 percent of the world's emeralds. More than 1,700,000 tons of bananas are exported annually, primarily to West Germany and Holland. Recent total export figures show: 43 percent to the United States, 14 percent to West Germany, and 5 percent to Spain; imports included the following: 48 percent from the United States, 11 percent from West Germany, and 5 percent from the United Kingdom. A serious trade deficit was indicated in 1966 when imports totalled \$565,000,000 and exports amounted to \$435,000,000.

In the past decade Colombian industry had undergone a dramatic modernization. Although many consumer goods are still imported, textiles, footwear, building materials, some chemicals, tires, glass, foodstuffs, tobacco, and pharmaceuticals are now being produced for national markets. Tariff protection has done much to stimulate the development of these industries.

Much of this progress has resulted from Colombian preeminence in economic planning. When World War II disrupted foreign trade with the industrialized nations, Colombia was obliged to manufacture substitutes for its most urgent needs, thus initiating Colombian interest in industrial expansion. Concurrent with this growth came a corresponding expansion of higher education. Between 1945 and 1963, 73 new secondary and university level specialties were introduced, many of them in technical and managerial fields. This interest in

national development was stimulated further by various economic studies carried out by foreign as well as Colombian specialists. Civil strife since 1948 made planning difficult until the military took over in May, 1957, and made a number of firm decisions subsequently ratified by national plebiscite.

In 1961 Colombia adopted the first General Plan on Economic and Social Development for the decade 1960-70. Laughlin Currie, head of the 1952 World Bank Mission to Colombia, was responsible for the so-called Currie Plan for development. It rested on the following premises:

1. Although presently accessible land in Colombia is insufficient to support the present rural population at adequate standards of living, this would not be the case if it were efficiently developed using modern technology;
2. The objective of government agricultural policy should be to encourage fewer farmers to produce with greater efficiency;
3. The people should then be encouraged to leave the land and migrate to the cities where they can be provided with better and cheaper education along with health and other social services;
4. This influx would be absorbed by large public construction programs which would generate, through wages paid, a greater demand for consumer goods. This would in turn stimulate industry to utilize its present capacity.

These projected changes, Currie says, would result in a self-sustaining process of capital formation and industrial expansion which would provide added employment simultaneous with the phasing out of the construction. Coincidentally, civil disorder and violence in much of rural Colombia has increased the rate of migration to urban areas, thus enhancing the possibility of implementing Currie's concept.

Despite export imbalances and grave social problems, increasing domestic stability since 1957 has led to greater economic prosperity. The ruling classes are now largely inspired (as far as economic growth is concerned) to believe that prosperity can be created, and they have taken steps to encourage constructive economic development. In addition, expansion in the use of consumer credit, uncommon in Colombia until the 1960's, has now begun to be employed as a means of increasing the comparative affluence of the middle and lower classes.

#### Rural Conditions

According to the 1964 census, Colombia's population was 52.8 percent urban. Yet, like most Latin American nations, Colombia is predominantly rural, despite a rapid trend toward urbanization during the past twenty years. On the other hand, only 2 percent of the nation's total land area is cultivated, and only 7.5 percent of the potentially arable land is in use, although about half of the population earn their living in agriculture.

Land ownership patterns vary considerably from one region of the country to another. Taken as a whole, however, more than 60 percent of the farmers own roughly 4 percent of the land in lots of about 3 hectares (7.4 acres). Although farms of more than 100 hectares (247 acres) are owned by less than 3 percent of the farmers, they account for more than half the land area. Stock farms of more than 750 acres occupy more than 31 percent of the total arable area. Many of the very small holdings are broken up into non-contiguous plots, and the smallest holdings, known as minifundia, are frequently the poorest

lands. In the southwestern Colombian state of Nariño, the Institute of Agrarian Reform (INCORA) found 36,000 minifundistas plus approximately 10,000 families without any land. This amounts to about 230,000 individuals with a per capita daily cash income between 4 and 15 cents (U. S. currency).<sup>8</sup>

A typical peasant family lives in a dirt-floored adobe house of two or three rooms. Water is carried from the nearest stream, which may be a mile distant. Since laundry and bathing are done in the same stream, the drinking water is likely to be polluted. Although considerable progress is being made, 90 percent of the population in some parts of rural Colombia have intestinal parasites.

Infant mortality is extremely high.<sup>9</sup> A survey conducted by INCORA of 123 heads of rural peasant families in 6 departments revealed that 21 had never attended school, 9 had attended one year, 28 two years, 25 three years, and 36 four to five years. Only four had attended some secondary school.<sup>10</sup>

### History

Colombia was originally populated by Indians moving northward from Ecuador. They settled at altitudes between 7,500 and 8,500 feet because above this elevation the climate was too cold, and below

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<sup>8</sup> Holt, op. cit., p. 86.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 11-12.

<sup>10</sup> María Guarnizo, Evaluación de Progreso Campesino, Bogota: Instituto Colombiano de la Reforma Agraria, Oficina de Divulgación 1967, p. 57.

it malarial mosquitos were a menace. The first permanent settlement by Spaniards was established in 1529 by Rodrigo de Bastidas at Santa Marta. European control of the interior began with Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada. While attempting to discover the source of the Magdalena River in 1536, Jiménez conquered the sedentary Chibcha Indians in that area and two years later founded Santa Fé de Bogotá.

From the earliest days of the Spanish Conquest, the Catholic clergy played a vital part in the development of what is now Colombia. With Quesada and others came missionaries, of whom the Dominicans were the most numerous, although there were also many Augustinians, Franciscans, and Jesuits. The religious brotherhoods included physicians, teachers, and craftsmen, and these orders exerted a powerful moral influence, frequently intervening in the administration of justice -- more often than not on behalf of the Indians.

For nearly two centuries, French, English, and Dutch privateers menaced the colony by attacking Spanish shipping. Sir Frances Drake captured Cartagena in 1585 and forced the Spanish to pay a huge ransom for the return of the city. The first revolution against colonial authorities, the Revolt of the Comuneros (common people), was suppressed in Socorro in 1781. The movement toward independence received further impetus in 1794 with a translation of the French Declaration of the Rights of Man by the creole Antonio Nariño. For such activities Nariño was exiled to Africa for ten years; however, he managed to escape and return to Colombia disguised as a priest. In July, 1810, a rebel junta deposed the Spanish viceroy and took command of Bogota in the name of Ferdinand VII, then a prisoner of Napoleon. After Napoleon's defeat in 1815, Spain sent Pablo Morillo in command

of 10,000 veterans to reassert Spanish control. His forces captured Cartagena after a siege of 106 days and marched on to Bogota, killing many of the revolutionary government's most distinguished leaders. In August, 1819, after a long march from the plains of Venezuela, troops commanded by Simón Bolívar, Francisco de Paula Santander, and José Antonio Anzoátegui defeated the Spanish Army. The Republic of Gran Colombia was proclaimed in December, 1819, consisting of Venezuela, present-day Colombia, and Ecuador. In 1829 Venezuela left the Republic and Ecuador followed suit the next year. The remaining provinces formed the Republic of New Granada, which, under a new constitution in 1863, became the United States of Colombia. Colombia has officially been designated as a republic since the constitution of 1886. In 1903 Panama declared its independence as a separate nation, a status recognized by Colombia in 1921.

Since independence from Spain, fundamental differences have existed between Colombian advocates of a strong central government and those favoring a federal system similar to that of the United States. These conflicting viewpoints were defended by dedicated statesmen whose positions, unfortunately, often led to revolt and open warfare. Out of these two opposing factions grew the country's historical political parties, the Conservatives and the Liberals. Each party was in power alternately for the first 30 years after 1830. Between 1863 and 1884 the Liberals were in control of the national government, but the revolution of 1885 led to a Liberal defeat and marked the end of the federal system. The country fell into such a state of financial difficulty and attendant demoralization at that time that its leaders decided to put its welfare above partisanship; they therefore formed

a national party. A reform movement headed by President Rafael Nuñez resulted in the adoption of the Constitution of 1886, still the basic document of the republic today.

In 1887, a concordat with the Holy See in Rome established the freedom and independence of the Roman Catholic Church as an agency separate from the state. It also gave the Church the right to establish religious orders and to direct religious teaching, which was made compulsory in all the schools.

The struggle between Liberals and Conservatives was then resumed, culminating in 1902 with the end of the War of a Thousand Days. This was followed by a comparatively harmonious half-century, until Liberal leader Jorge Gaitán was assassinated in 1948. The resulting civil violence began to diminish when responsible leaders of the Liberal and Conservative parties established the National Front in 1958. This coalition will be described later in this chapter.

#### Government

Colombia is a unitary republic. The country is divided into 22 departments, 3 intendencias and 5 comisarías. Departments are comparable to small American states, and intendencias and comisarías represent largely undeveloped territory. In December, 1966, a new department named Risaralda was created from territory formerly belonging to the department of Caldas. In 1967 two more departments were created -- César and Sucre. Departments are sub-divided into municipal districts, or municipalities, headed by a mayor who is the administrative officer and representative of the governor of the department. Each municipality elects its own council.

Senators and representatives are elected by popular vote. The Senate has 80 members and the House of Representatives 144. In the same elections the people vote for deputies to the departmental assemblies and municipal councils. The country's President is elected for a four-year term but cannot succeed himself. He appoints his 13 ministers and the governor of each department. Departmental assemblies supervise administration and finance, thus having some autonomy. Intendencias and comisarías are under direct control of the national government.

At present Colombia is governed by the National Front, a coalition of the two traditional parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives. This coalition was begun in 1958 and was to continue for 12 years. It was later extended four more years and President Carlos Llerds Restrepo's term of office ends in 1970. The National Front seeks to provide stability in a country plagued by violence and civil strife which has cost up to 200,000 lives since 1948 when Liberal leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán was assassinated. Under its direction, the presidency is alternated between the two major political parties, neither of which is allowed to control more than half of the seats in either of the two houses of Congress. Although only two political parties are permitted, open elections and internal factions have resulted in a government which at times has had difficulty raising a majority for any effective action. In addition, it exists constantly under the threat of an elected majority opposed to the National Front concept.

La Violencia. Violence has never been completely absent from Colombia, but two particular periods of violence stand out -- first, between

1948 and 1953, especially in the following departments: Tolima, Boyacá, Cundinamarca, Antioquia, Valle, Caldas, Cauca, Santander del Sur, Arauca, Huila, Chocó, Caquetá, Meta, Casanare, Vichada, and Bolívar, and second, between 1954 and 1958 in Caldas, Valle, Antioquia, Cundinamarca, Tolima, Huila, and Cauca. Where violence still continues, it is found mainly in these regions.<sup>11</sup> In the beginning, la violencia was a struggle for power between the two political parties. The Liberals tried to oust the Conservative government, and the Conservatives sought to keep their control of a government which had a Liberal majority. As time passed, the violence lost its clearly political objectives and became a movement characterized by vengeance, banditry, and terrorism. This bloodshed directly affected at least 20 percent of the population for a generation. Although non-political banditry still continues in certain rural areas (about 1,800 murders a year), there is a general consensus among Colombians now that la violencia is no longer a significant factor in national political life.

The upper classes reacted to la violencia with a new appreciation of the fact that beneath the thin veneer of republicanism lay a revolutionary pressure among the rural masses which could undermine the stability of the traditional system. It became increasingly apparent that government had to acquire a more popular character if there were to be real stability. The national government is now active in many reform programs. Important universities are beginning to engage in research about rural problems. In addition, the Roman

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<sup>11</sup> Norman A. Bailey, "La Violencia en Colombia," Journal of Inter-American Studies, 9:561, October, 1967.

Catholic Church has become increasingly concerned with social reform. The more liberal position taken by the Second Vatican Council on social change has become a rallying point for reform elements in the Church's hierarchy.

The insecurity of rural life in many areas has caused a significant migration to Colombian cities; the rural education problem is therefore fast becoming an urban one. Since in a broad sense education can create loyalties, national leadership groups reacted to the possible political and social menace posed by rural migrants by expanding urban education to these new social groups. They especially concentrated on working class areas, but they included rural areas as well. In this sense, then, the political crisis and its attendant rural violence placed a large segment of the educationally neglected rural population in urban settings where opportunities for schooling were greater. School enrollment increased correspondingly. These changes are contributing in important ways to improved educational conditions in Colombia.

## CHAPTER 2

### CULTURAL AND SOCIAL INFLUENCES ON EDUCATION

Social and cultural circumstances are inseparably linked to educational theory and practice. In Colombia, as in other Latin American countries, these factors significantly determine who shall be educated, what kind of education is to be provided, and how much education is needed for the various walks of life.

The middle class in Colombia makes up about 10 to 15 percent of the total population; it consists of an increasing number of white-collar employees, technicians, and young professionals. As in most of Latin America, the term "middle class" often applies to social rather than to economic status; consequently, many Colombians, including schoolteachers, are considered middle-class, even though they earn less than many workers. Some businessmen and landowners have incomes that are quite high, but their cultural background and style of living sometimes place them in a lower class. The principal determinants of class status are lineage, racial derivation, and wealth, but a secondary set of determinants includes educational attainment, refinement of manners, and intellectual and literary distinction. One's pattern of personal associations and style of dress also contribute to his social status. Recent trends toward industrialization and urbanization have tended to create a sharper cleavage between the more affluent urban society and the relatively static social structure.

of rural communities. With increasing modernization, the ruling class is becoming more willing to relax its exclusive grip on political power; education is benefiting somewhat from this change. At the same time, the lower classes are becoming increasingly aware of the extent to which they have been excluded from opportunity by the policies of the elite.<sup>1</sup>

Until very recently, the relationships between upper and lower classes have been of a paternalistic nature. The upper-class patrón had a sense of responsibility toward his employees and his tenants; now, however, the gradually increasing role in social welfare being assumed by the government is likely to result in a long-range improvement for the poor because their direct personal dependence upon patrones is being replaced by institutional services provided by the government.<sup>2</sup>

Most Colombians with any significant amount of schooling share the values of the elite for two very cogent reasons: first, emulation of these values has practical economic and social advantages and, second, they themselves are being pressured by imitation from below. The attitude of the educated elite towards the illiterate masses is one of superiority sometimes tempered with benevolent paternalism, with the people at the base of the social pyramid frequently regarded as inferior beings incapable of improving their socio-economic circumstances. Ideally, compassion, especially among the affluent classes, takes the form of charity and almsgiving, but in general, few efforts are being made by the upper classes to help create conditions conducive to social

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<sup>1</sup>Legters, op. cit., pp. 95-96.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 306.

improvement, for the lower classes. Despite poverty and periods of social unrest, however, the vast majority of lower-class peasants apparently accept their second-class role with resignation.<sup>3</sup>

The "cultured gentleman" attitude prevalent among the ruling classes frequently results in a distinctive kind of social behavior. One is expected to listen to the opinions of others without ever offending them or offering one's own views. As a consequence, open intellectual exchanges are generally considered to be in bad taste. Among the lower classes, this attitude often results in violent personal confrontations. A related characteristic is the tendency to emphasize who a person is rather than what he stands for. The result of this is that personal dogmatism is often valued as highly as logical argument.<sup>4</sup>

#### Cultural Characteristics

A Colombian's first duty is to his family. Allegiance to other social entities, such as village, social class (if a member of the elite), political party, and sometimes professional or occupational group, is secondary. Persons of superior status owe their subordinates protection and concern; they in turn reciprocate with support and respect. Loyalty to one's superiors takes precedence over loyalty to one's equals. Individualism is highly valued, most often taking the

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<sup>3</sup> Gustavo Jiménez Cadena, Sacerdote y Cambio Social, Bogota: Ediciones Tercer Mundo, 1967, pp. 64-65.

<sup>4</sup> José Gutiérrez, De la Pseudo-aristocracia a la Autenticidad, Bogota: Ediciones Tercer Mundo, 1966, pp. 49, 54 and 59.

form of a confident self-assertiveness. The fact that cultural change occurs frequently only as a result of violence can be attributed partly to a scale of values that favors this kind of aggressive behavior. Top-level leadership is exercised by men conscious of their superior ancestry and secure in the knowledge that their positions cannot easily be challenged.<sup>5</sup>

The individualism and personal dignity common to Colombians is sometimes misconstrued as callousness or indifference. It could be more appropriately identified as an unawareness of the existence of a world outside one's immediate circle of family and personal friends. It is this feeling which inhibits the development of concern for the welfare of others as well as for the development of public institutions such as schools. The Spanish language itself often supports this same kind of thinking. Rather than the English "I forgot my books," the Spanish construction implies that somehow the books forgot themselves, thus deflecting the blame otherwise due the speaker.

Fatalism is also prevalent in popular thinking. If God wills that a school does not open for lack of funds, the Colombian feels that there is little sense in trying to change this circumstance. If one is born an illiterate peasant, he is likely to feel it is foolish to attempt to be someone else. Points of view such as these are important factors in cultural resistance to change.

Colombians, like most other South Americans, tend to view life in political terms. A central feature of this attitude is the belief that when someone gets ahead in life or business, it is always at

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<sup>5</sup> Legters, op. cit., p. 115.

another person's expense. This conflicts directly with the North American notion that one person's success contributes to the benefit of all. At the same time, Colombians treasure close personal friendships more highly; not only are good friends a source of deep enjoyment, but they also can be depended upon to give help graciously in time of need. This spirit is almost always reciprocated.

People outside these friendship patterns matter very little; however, if acquaintances are made in an appropriate manner, courtesy and friendship are generously offered. Concern for the general public exists hardly at all. A good example of this occurred in Bogota early in 1968. There was much discussion in the press about the number of five-to-ten year old street urchins and beggars with physical deformities; however, this concern was not for the parentless urchins or the cripples themselves, but for the capital, which without them would be more beautiful for the Pope's visit later in the year.

Values and traditions such as these make it difficult for Colombians to work together. Not only are the educated encouraged to develop a fondness for their own ideas and an emotional commitment to setting them forth effectively, but they are also correspondingly less receptive to the views of others. Ordinary citizens find it difficult to comprehend that their government is concerned about their problems. They find it difficult to believe that anyone outside their immediate circle of friends could have a disinterested concern for their welfare. Therefore, cooperation to attain social goals is relatively difficult to achieve, although surprising progress is being made among those peasants who are beginning to see their government as a substitute for the patrón.

Youth Customs. In all social classes young males enjoy the virtual absence of restrictive supervision. The upper- or middle-class boy is allowed to spend much of his time outside his home, either in clubs or with friends. The lower-class youth has fewer social activities only because he must earn a living. Girls, regardless of social class, are much more carefully supervised. They learn the traditional feminine skills and attitudes from their mothers. Although the practice of chaperonage is rarely observed among the poorer classes of society, it is inflexibly adhered to among the upper classes.

Boys from the higher classes may accept employment when they near adulthood, but usually, choose only white-collar jobs which do not impair their class status. A lower-class stigma is attached to manual labor of all kinds, and to perform such work usually invites social ostracism. Girls are even more limited in their vocational opportunities, but the popularity of secretarial education for women attests to the social suitability of this type of white-collar employment for them. Even though the first years of elementary education seek to inculcate social values and habits which will enable any child to function as if he were a member of the traditional upper-middle class, it is evident that lower-class and peasant life varies greatly from the norms described above.

Alcohol is an indispensable part of rural community life. Drinks are constantly being pressed on guests as a gesture of hospitality and friendship. Not participating gives one a reputation for being standoffish, which has caused many foreigners, especially U. S. Peace Corps volunteers, considerable anguish. One volunteer handled the problem with real ingenuity. He gave up aguardiente, a native

liquor, for Lent, thus not only avoiding the aquardiente, but also impressing his rural friends with his strong character.<sup>6</sup>

Individualism. From early childhood Colombians are taught to look after their own interests. This individualism becomes personal and inward-looking, emphasizing the uniqueness of the individual personality and inner-being, a uniqueness which is to be maintained at all costs, for it reinforces a sense of dignity and personal pride. The leader of an organization is usually the one who is expected to determine most of its policies, frequently without even consulting his closest supporters. Followers tend to judge their leader by the power he wields and place a premium upon his ability to outmaneuver rival groups. His personal reputation and strength of character also contribute to his effectiveness as a leader.<sup>7</sup>

Although many educated Colombians are thoroughly familiar with North American customs, a Colombian who is not is likely to be offended by their apparently impersonal manner. For example, it is considered poor taste to get to the point in a professional or business matter before one has exchanged pleasantries about the health of one's family, the weather, or the latest political gossip. This kind of interchange indicates that each party respects the personality and individuality of the other. It thus enables them to function more or less as equals in the matter to be considered. It is, of course, perfectly appropriate to come directly to the point when dealing with a subordinate.

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<sup>6</sup> Holt, op. cit., p. 140.

<sup>7</sup> Legters, op. cit., p. 119.

Many Colombians are alert to the possibility that their interests will be hurt by another's acts. Although this suspicion is strong toward outsiders, it is even stronger among associates. Peasants automatically assume that outsiders of higher social standing, such as census takers, salesmen, landowners, etc., are seeking to exploit them. To avoid being taken in, and above all to protect their dignity, individuals of all social classes resort to deception and prevarication. In addition, persons of low status often lie because they seek to avoid offending a person of higher standing. They will say what they believe their listener wants to hear, rather than what they think are the facts.<sup>8</sup>

Peasant traditions vary from place to place in Colombia; moreover, schooling as a means of communicating the values of upper-class society is often unavailable to the lower classes. Thus there is some indication that, among peasants, many personality traits common to the upper echelons are neither valued nor sought after. A premium is placed upon avoiding complex decisions, and many employers actually want their workers to remain intellectually immature. Workers of low status who demonstrate more than mere functional knowledge are negatively regarded by their peers. Because of their situation, persons in servile positions tend not to have significant aspirations;<sup>9</sup> consequently, schooling, even on the elementary level with its emphasis upon upper-class values, is irrelevant, if not dangerous to their life situation.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 118.

<sup>9</sup> Sam Schulman, "Intellectual and Technological Underdevelopment: A Case Study - Colombia," Social Forces, 46:313-16, March, 1968.

Latin American individualism encourages a sense of emotional commitment to the rightness of one's feelings, or inner-being. As a result, a tradition of intellectual subjectivity predisposes many Colombians to admire everything uncritically. This respect for the emotional dimension of knowledge sometimes reduces the amount of care and thoroughness with which facts are gathered in support of a particular point of view. In addition, because a point of view taken tends to be subjectively held, it is more difficult to change. This spirit of uncritical enthusiasm often produces vigorous approval at first for proposals and programs; the support, however, dwindles soon after the initial excitement for the idea has passed.

Respect for authority is another important principle of Colombian social thought. Children of all classes are taught esteem for their elders, and this tradition is carried into adulthood. Parents, persons of high social position, and the clergy are generally accorded this regard. The Roman Catholic Church as the repository of final truth also enforces respect for moral and secular authorities by means of religion and philosophy courses required in both private and public schools. Society is essentially viewed as pyramidal and paternalistic. Although no accurate data are available, probably 98 percent of all Colombians profess Catholicism, a much higher proportion than that of most other Latin American countries. It is significant, however, that many Colombians rarely participate in any church activities. In times of national stress, particularly during the period of la violencia, the Church was virtually the only force that held the nation together. Moreover, it is the only tradition that nearly all Colombians have in common, especially since access to free public

education has been so limited.<sup>10</sup> This special status of the Church naturally deeply involves it in the government's educational efforts.

### Educational Attitudes

Like most people, Colombians think of education primarily as a means of improving their opportunities to get a job. A secondary role is to provide the upward social mobility necessary for gaining access to preferred positions or select circles. To a lesser extent, schooling is also valued as a means of developing the intellectual faculties.<sup>11</sup> Most Colombians do value education highly, and although they tend to think of it as the accumulation of factual knowledge, they are generally quite eager to improve its quality. A middle-class family will sacrifice considerably in order that at least one of its members may achieve a secondary education.

To the middle-class Colombian, education is frequently regarded as a service to be bought by those who can afford it, rather than as a socially approved right; consequently, there is a tendency to keep the cost of schooling as low as possible. The common word for school (escuela) is usually used in a pejorative sense to refer to public elementary schools -- usually of low quality. Elementary and secondary institutions intended for the education of the higher classes are called colegios. When politicians promise schools, they generally

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<sup>10</sup> Orlando Fals Borda, "Bases for a Sociological Interpretation of Education in Colombia," in Wilgus, A. Curtus, editor, The Caribbean: Contemporary Colombia, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1962, p. 188.

<sup>11</sup> Alejandro Bernal Escobar et al, La Educación en Colombia, Bogota: Centro de Investigaciones Sociales, Departamento Socio-Económico, 1965, p. 262.

mean elementary schools of poor quality for those who cannot afford colegios.

The person who cannot read is looked down upon by those who can with a mixture of pity and contempt, for he is obviously lacking in culture. The terms culture (la cultura) and education are sometimes used synonymously. They reflect the emphasis that Latin American society generally places upon courteous manners and elaborate speech as the best indicators of one's social education. Even in the first year of school, curriculum content represents an effort to inculcate into the young child the kind of verbal information about the world which an urbane member of the upper class is presumed to possess. There is a great deal of agreement at all educational levels that this ideal of the cultivated individual is a worthy one.

Despite the government's assuming the responsibility for providing free public education for all, hundreds of thousands of children remain without schools of any kind. If it is suggested to rural villagers that they need a school, they will always agree, but their next comment will be that it is not their responsibility to initiate action. In their experience, responsibility belongs at a higher level -- to the patrón or the government. They would recoil from the notion that they could build a school themselves in a few months; it would be something totally inconsistent with their role in life. If they do accept the responsibility for such an innovation, there will usually be an elaborate ritual in organizing a plan of action. Typically, before it is finished, there will be delays, disputes over the school's location and design, and a great deal of difficulty

in reaching a compromise on any number of controversial points.<sup>12</sup>

Efforts to make rural schools more relevant to the life style of peasants sometimes fail for lack of interest and support from the communities they are designed to serve. This happens partly because practical education does not confer status, but primarily because the peasant has learned not to take chances. He will resist new ideas more often than not because the farming methods his family has been using for generations may not produce an abundance, but he knows they produce something. On the other hand, if an innovation should result in total failure, he knows he can expect to starve.

Educational Expectations. A typical urban middle-class Colombian is likely to possess a bachillerato (secondary diploma) and possibly some university experience. His children are likely to attend private secondary schools, and he expects that they will proceed to a national or departmental university. Although officials and middle-class intellectuals express concern about educational inadequacies, there is a general lack of active interest in public education. The urban middle class is the most eager to seek educational advantages; however there is little public outcry except at the beginning of the school year when many applicants are turned down for lack of public school facilities. The interest of the Ministry of Education in decentralizing education partly reflects a belief that the public will become more concerned with educational matters when it has more direct control over local public education.

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<sup>12</sup>Holt, op. cit., p. 10.

Colombians admire refined manners because they confer power and prestige and because they are symbols of upper-class education. This is why private colegios are preferred by those who can afford them. A second language is another symbol of status, the most preferred being English or French. People are considered respectable if they observe gracious manners in the classical European tradition. Well-intended behavior associated with the native cultures is deprecated; thus, emphasis upon the purely formal qualities of verbal expression is a manifestation of the ideology of upper-class culture. Since schooling so conceived brings prestige to him who masters it, limited support for education, schools, and teachers tends to confirm the educated Colombian in his special status. He is, therefore, relatively undisturbed about the fact that the lower classes do not have significant access to education. Manners and the effective use of language are therefore an essential part of the curriculum. Embarrassment and shame on the part of the lower classes who have not had sufficient access to education to enable them to acquire these attributes discourages the development of personal self-respect among indigenous groups, thereby hindering the growth of a genuine national identity.<sup>13</sup>

A related value is that of señoritismo. This is an attitude created and reinforced by the social environment of the school. It tends to inculcate a sense of dignidad and respectability (especially in secondary students) akin to that of the traditional Spanish gentleman. At the same time, concern is frequently voiced that

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<sup>13</sup> Guiérrez, op. cit., pp. 44-46 and 35.

attitudes of tolerance for the views of others are insufficiently integrated into the cultural content of education.<sup>14</sup>

The majority of rural peasants do not think much about improving their social status because they perceive few safe opportunities for such advancement. Under these circumstances, only very practical instruction is appreciated, and this is unfortunately not the kind of learning which the elementary school usually offers. Demands for better education are most likely to be made by parents in small cities which lack a secondary school or by parents in poor sectors of cities where society is in transition. Among these people, traditional education is still highly valued because it confers a status having a definite market value in the society in which they aspire to move. There is very little concern about educational content or quality of instruction; consequently, education does not have to be practical to be useful to people who can move through it into a higher social class.

A similar process is at work in rural communities. According to a study of a rural village called "Aritama" (pseud.),<sup>15</sup> favoritism and even racial prejudice were frequent. In this community, teachers insisted that children attend school in clean, new clothes. Those who were unable to do so were publicly ridiculed by teachers and pupils. Mode of dress was the principal criterion used to award medals and other prizes at the end of the school year. Teachers encouraged girls to carry umbrellas and handbags, use cosmetics, and

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<sup>14</sup> Bernal, op. cit., pp. 267-8.

<sup>15</sup> Gerardo and Alicia Reichel-Dolmatoff, The People of Aritama: The Cultural Personality of a Colombian Mestizo Village, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961, pp. 123-25.

wear stockings and costume jewelry -- expensive items which only the well-to-do families could afford. Teachers kept in close personal touch with parents of children who belonged to their own social class, but never visited poor families. The parents usually took little interest in their children's attendance or progress at school. In fact, they seemed to feel that they were doing the teacher and the government a personal favor by sending their children to school.

The methods employed in Aritama had a far-reaching effect both in teaching children the high prestige value of good clothes and ceremonial behavior, and in teaching them to abhor manual labor and cooperative effort. Many poor children thus are brought into direct opposition to their parents. The teachers considered the school as a center of Spanish tradition, and therefore the participation of Indians was not considered desirable. Many poor people were thus effectively excluded from sending their children to school because of discrimination or the inability to buy new clothing.

Knowledge in the Aritama school is reduced to a set of ready questions and answers, beyond which little or nothing is added. The same pattern is maintained in adult life, with the individual's answering standard questions in a perfunctory, stereotyped way. The school's teaching creates a world completely devoid of the attitudes necessary for democratic development. It teaches children that well-dressed, well-fed, God-fearing, hard-working Spaniards are not only equal but superior to others. The children learn that their village is the heart of the world, and that the only forces bent on destroying this paradise are the Indians and the national government. Physical labor is to be avoided, although white-collar employment is sought as a

sinecure is well-deserved by anyone who has attended school. Not all rural Colombian communities share in the attitudes and traditions described above, but they are common enough to suggest the impact of a particular sector of Colombian society on the school. In urban areas the situation is more favorable, for many educated Colombians now have a wider viewpoint. They are receptive to new ideas, and they have a greater interest and confidence in education as a means of bringing about desirable social and economic change. Civil service legislation enacted in 1962, together with increasing concern by the national government, has created a more widespread belief that in schools professionally qualified teachers are increasingly being favored over those with privileged political or social connections. Such changes seek to strike at the heart of needed educational improvement in Colombia.

## CHAPTER 3

### EDUCATIONAL LANDMARKS AND TRADITIONS

Institutions and attitudes persist for centuries. It is only through an understanding of such traditions and the reasons for the changes in them which have taken place over the years, that present practices and aspirations become comprehensible. Current problems in education, as in other areas of human activity, reflect many of the unresolved problems of the past.

#### The Preconquest

The best known of the preconquest Colombian Indians were the Chibchas, who settled principally in the highlands around Bogota. Culturally and politically, they are often ranked inferior only to the Aztecs, the Mayans, and the Incas. The only definite indication, however, of a formal educational institution among these tribes is the Moja, the Cuca, or seminary, in which religious rites and traditions were taught. Carefully chosen children received instruction in performing sun ceremonies, in which they eventually were burned to death. Practical skills, such as crafts and other traditional kinds of specialized knowledge, seem to have been transmitted through the family.

Colonial Education

Spanish colonists who received grants of land from the Crown (repartimientos) according to the Cédula of 1509 were initially required to teach Christian doctrines and civilized living to the Indians under their charge. Much of this indoctrination was informal; it required Indians to gather every Sunday in the town square at the sound of the bells and learn by rote the dogma of the Catholic Church. Monastic schools were also established by religious orders to teach Spanish and sacred doctrines to the Indian nobility. The Spanish Crown did not establish schools of any kind -- a characteristic, incidentally, of education in the English-speaking world as well at the time. Although the educational task was left primarily to religious groups, the state often contributed funds. The first schools (doctrinas), which were established by religious orders during the early 16th century, were designed principally to convert the Indians to Roman Catholicism. By 1556 the curriculum had been expanded to include reading, writing, arithmetic, and singing.

Although education in the 16th and 17th centuries was regarded as a responsibility of parents, aided by the church the Spanish government was concerned from the very beginning with making the people of all its conquered territories, regardless of race and social position, into effective citizens. The Cédulas of 1565 ordered the establishment of basic literacy schools in all towns, with local responsibility for their support. Archbishop Fray Luis Zapata de Cárdenas founded the Colegio Seminario de San Luis in 1582 in order to train Indian clerics, but his efforts were bitterly

opposed by the creoles and the Spanish-born aristocracy. The institution failed four years later because of a student strike.<sup>1</sup>

In the establishment of higher institutions of education, final approval had to be secured from the Pope. Civil and church authorities in 1580 received permission to convert the Dominican Convent of the Rosary into a studium generale modeled after Salamanca in Spain. It received all the rights and privileges of a Spanish university, but it was restricted to the white ruling groups.

The Jesuits laid the groundwork for the first colegios mayores with the Colegio Real Mayor y Seminario de San Bartolomé in 1605. They created 18 annual fellowships for students pursuing an ecclesiastical career. Young men of noble lineage who wanted to study arts and theology were also admitted for a fee, provided they knew Latin and were at least 12 years of age. Each Sunday and Monday there were 55 Ave Marias and 5 Paternosters sung, illustrating the extent of the religious spirit of Colombians at this time. No smoking was permitted, and each day's study began with a 15-minute prayer.<sup>2</sup> This institution was soon followed by similar ones in Popoyán, Cartagena, and Pamplona.

The Colegio Real Mayor de Nuestra Señora del Rosario, established in 1653, was founded in the democratic tradition of the ancient Roman-Gothic legislation. It later became the most important colegio mayor in the colony. The Dominicans founded a chair of advanced grammar for Indians and sons of settlers in 1563, but it failed to develop into a university for lack of funds. Javeriana University, founded originally

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<sup>1</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Fals Borda, op. cit., pp. 186-187.

in 1622, functioned under the principles of the Ratio Studiorum, but it closed in 1767 when the Jesuits were expelled. The Jesuits established seven other secondary schools in the provinces between 1605 and 1743. At the same time, they spent much of their time teaching the Indians practical arts and crafts. By the early 18th century, the Dominicans and the Jesuits had each founded important universities. The faculty of jurisprudence at the Colegio Mayor de Nuestra Señora del Rosario has functioned continuously since 1653.

By the middle of the 18th century, university classrooms gradually began opening to the laity, especially the creoles. Even cátedras (lectureships) were being granted to lay persons. Viceroy-Archbishop Antonio Caballero y Góngora sought unsuccessfully in 1787 to secularize the Thomistic University when he proposed a plan which would (in his own words) "substitute useful exact sciences for those which are merely speculative." He felt that the director of studies should encourage the sons of artisans, laborers, and the poor to study industrial arts if they were incapable of other careers. Professors should add new knowledge by analytic rather than by syllogistic methods.<sup>3</sup> However, in spite of all this, attempts to establish a public university in the 18th century were doomed to failure because of the opposition of the Catholic Church. After Independence, as education gradually passed into the hands of secular authorities, these efforts were realized.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 189.

<sup>4</sup> Legters, op. cit., p. 149.

The emergence of an educated, non-ecclesiastical, native-born American intellectual group in New Granada in the 18th century led to greater enthusiasm for English and French ideas. Secularity was becoming an accepted social value, and there was a greater emphasis upon discovering local facts, coupled with a similar decline in interest in theological questions. Physician-botanist José Celestino Mutis arrived in Colombia in 1762, and soon reported, "[There is] a scarcity of rationality so intense that any enlightened understanding is considered dangerous." He initiated a courageous effort to change this intellectual conservatism by presenting the Copernican system of astronomy at the Colegio del Rosario in 1774. His views soon brought him before the Inquisition. His stand was particularly outstanding because it marked the first significant attempt to present important ideas without the usual theological justifications, thereby marking the beginning of the acceptance of more modern intellectual trends among the aristocratic groups who were exposed to education.<sup>5</sup>

The famous Botanical Expedition was organized in 1783 by Archbishop Caballero y Góngora soon after he became Viceroy of New Granada. Its original purposes were to study the plants of northern South America, to make and record astronomical, physical and geographical observations, and to draw maps of the regions explored. The Expedition was directed for 20 years by Father Mutis, and under him became a center of scientific learning. It discovered or identified many different kinds of oils, gums, resins, waxes, medicines, precious woods, marbles, fruits, and commercial products, samples of which were sent to the Spanish court.

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<sup>5</sup>Fals Borda, op. cit., p. 189.

By the third decade of the 19th century, secularity had gradually become synonymous with practicality. This circumstance brought about a greater emphasis upon non-theological studies. The study of medicine was introduced in 1850 (although some medicine had been studied at the Colegio del Rosario two centuries earlier), civil engineering in 1861, and fine arts in 1887.

Despite the distance from European cultural centers and the primitive conditions which prevailed in most of the country, some residents of Bogota managed to live with considerable elegance. By the end of the colonial era in 1810, Bogota's population of 20,000 could boast of four printing presses (the first one having been brought in by the Jesuits in 1737), several newspapers, an astronomical observatory, a theater, and a university. A celebrated scientific journal, El Semanario, was founded in 1808 and edited by José de Caldas, and another along scientific lines, by Jorge Tadeo Lozano. Although liberal views regarding educational matters were often suppressed, the constitution of Tunja of 1811 said simply,

learning is absolutely necessary for sustaining a government and for [promoting] the general welfare; the people therefore have the right [to expect] that the government make a substantial effort to provide for the instruction of all classes of citizens.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Estudio y Proyecto de Educación Media para Presentar al Banco Internacional de Reconstrucción y Fomento, Bogota: Oficina de Planeamiento, Institutos Nacionales de Educación Media, September, 1967. (Hereafter referred to as Proyecto de Educación Media), Antecedentes Generales, Part 1, Volume 1, p. 20.

Independence and the Nineteenth Century

Francisco Paula de Santander is considered to be the father of Colombian education. Due to his influence, Bolívar placed all education (including seminaries) under government control. Children of all social classes and ethnic groups became eligible for schooling, but it was not until 1826 that the General Director of Public Instruction first provided for the central administration of education at the national level. There were few schools at the time of Independence.

The Ideas of Englishmen were popular, particularly those of Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, Joseph Lancaster, and Andrew Bell. Lancaster, an English promoter of monitorial instructional techniques, visited Caracas, Venezuela, in 1824, and became acquainted with Bolívar. Franciscan Father Sebastian Mora (who may have seen Lancaster's work in Caracas) founded the first Lancastrian monitorial school in Capacho, a town near Cúcuta, in 1821. General Santander brought Mora to Bogota, where he established the first normal school for the training of monitorial teachers. Decree 26 of 1822 called for the various provinces to send able youths to training centers in Caracas, Bogota, and Quito to learn the Lancastrian system and to return to their communities to train teachers.<sup>7</sup> A law of 1826 ordered free public education and restricted voting rights to the literate. During a one-year period, seven new colegios, sixteen secondary schools, 52 Lancastrian monitorial schools, 434 literacy schools, and three

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<sup>7</sup> Luis Antonio Bohórquez Casallas, La Evolución Educativa en Colombia, Bogota: Publicaciones Cultural Colombia, 1956, p. 265.

normal schools were begun. A national university was also becoming a reality. Sunday schools, patterned after the English practice of conducting reading schools for workers' children, were functioning, and the London Bible Society was active in Bogota.

In 1828 Bolívar suppressed the writing of some of the more prominent European thinkers (including Bentham) in order to discourage politico-religious disputes. This marked the beginning of a conservative swing. There were two characteristics of anti-colonial reaction during these early years. One was an effort to increase opportunities for schooling for all without regard to race or social class, and the other was an effort to achieve openmindedness in the schools, especially by weakening ties with the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>8</sup>

After Bolívar's death in 1830 and the accession to power of Santander, Rufino Cuervo and other officials renewed their efforts to foster popular education. As a result, the number of schools rose in the department of Cundinamarca to 62 in three years, with over 2,000 children in attendance. By 1837 the nation had three universities, 26 post-elementary and traditional secondary schools, two schools for girls, about 200 Lancastrian monitorial schools, and 850 private and public literacy schools.

A new academic plan proposed in 1841 by Minister of the Interior Mariano Ospina issued a 48-chapter report calling for a reform of standards and an extension of public education using the monitorial principles of Joseph Lancaster and Andrew Bell. A novel reform introduced was that rural schools were to have their own practice

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<sup>8</sup>Fals Borda, op. cit., pp. 194 and 196.

gardens. Another important reform was the improvement of university discipline.<sup>9</sup>

Santander established the first national university in Bogota in 1826, but it did little more than combine existing institutions. University education did not receive truly national support until 1827, when Vice-President Santander founded the University of the Cauca in Popoyán. Others followed soon in Medellin, Cartagena, and Bogota. In 1867 President Santos Acosta established the university which has since survived under the name of the National University of Colombia. Legislation also ordered the creation of six schools, or "faculties," namely, Law, Medicine, Natural Sciences, Engineering, Arts and Handicrafts, and Philosophy and Letters. Although there was reasonable freedom of teaching at the new National University, the institution lacked corporate identity, and the schools never coordinated their curricula. Despite the increase in the number of practical subjects by the 1860's, most university students still preferred the more prestigious faculties over the new technical careers.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, a German mission was employed to establish normal schools using Pestalozzian methods. Efforts to finance education with taxes based on agricultural property failed because the legislators were nearly all landowners. Beginnings were made in trade and industrial education and in state inspection of schools, although as early as 1821, the Congress of Cúcuta had

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<sup>9</sup>Jaime Posada, Una Política Educativa para Colombia: la Educación en los Cuatro Años de la Administración Lleras, Vol. 1, Bogota: Imprenta Nacional, 1963, pp. xxii-xxiv.

passed legislation establishing school inspections and compulsory (but not free) school attendance.

The person generally acclaimed as the father of public education in Colombia is Dámaso Zapata. He directed education in the department of Santander and subsequently in the department of Cundinamarca (Bogota) after legislation passed in 1868 and 1870 had established the basis for a uniform system of public education. When he assumed office in Cundinamarca in July, 1872, only 3,594 children were in school. By the end of the term there were 8,414 enrolled; a little more than a year later this figure nearly doubled to 16,489.<sup>10</sup> An indication of Zapata's determination as an administrator was his imposition of a fine of five pesos for any principal who left school during working hours.<sup>11</sup> He also received considerable assistance in his efforts from the German pedagogical mission functioning in the country at that time. As civil strife increased the pressure on departmental and national treasuries, the large land-holders, who were well-represented in the various legislatures, did nothing to discourage the repeal of tax laws in support of elementary education. The Church too had sought to discourage public schools in which its influence was not pervasive.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ramón Zapata, Dámaso Zapata y la Reforma Educacionista en Colombia, Bogota: El Gráfico Editores, 1961, p. 205.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 183.

<sup>12</sup> Fals Borda, op. cit., p. 198.

### Church Educational Activities

During the early colonial period, the various religious orders of the Roman Catholic Church exercised a significant humanizing influence in their efforts to protect the Indians and to establish schools. When Charles III expelled the Jesuits from all of Spanish America in 1767, they had to abandon some 5,000 students in 14 Colombian colegios.

The conflict between church and state had its origins in the colonial period. The issue then was not so much one of clericalism vs. anti-clericalism as it was one of the general rights and powers of temporal and spiritual authorities. Some of those particular questions involved the jurisdiction of church courts, whether or not ecclesiastical appointments were to be controlled by the church or by the state, and whether or not secular schools and non-Catholic cemeteries should be allowed. Liberals generally upheld the power of the state on these issues, while Conservatives upheld the power of the church. To quell political disturbances resulting from this situation, the Concordat of 1887 was signed with the Vatican. It provided that

the Roman Catholic Apostolic religion is the religion of Colombia; the public powers recognize it as an essential element of the social order, and they are bound to protect and enforce respect for it and its ministers, leaving to it at the same time the full enjoyment of its rights and prerogatives.

The Concordat provided further that the church

will enjoy complete liberty and independence of the civil power, and consequently, there shall be no intervention of this power in the free exercise of its spiritual authority and ecclesiastical jurisdiction, its government and administration conforming to its own laws.

The church was granted legal status, however, and agreed that church property, except churches, seminaries, and clerical residences, may be taxed.<sup>13</sup>

The Concordat gave the church vast power over education.

In the universities, colleges, schools, and other centers of learning, education and public instruction will be organized and directed in conformity with the dogma and morals of the Catholic religion. Religious instruction will be obligatory in such centers, and the highest practices of the Catholic religion will be observed in them.

Consequently, in such centers of learning, the respective diocesan ordinaries, by themselves, or by special delegates, will exercise the right respecting religion and morals, of inspection and revision of textbooks. The Archbishop of Bogota will designate the books that should serve as texts for religion and morals in the universities; and to the end of assuring uniformity of instruction in the indicated matters, this prelate, in agreement with the other diocesan ordinaries, will select the texts for the other schools of official instruction. The government will prevent, in the conduct of literary and scientific courses, and in general, in all branches of instruction, the propagation of ideas which run contrary to Catholic dogma and to the respect and veneration due the church.

In the event that instruction in religion and morals, in spite of the orders and preventative measures of the government, does not conform to Catholic doctrine, the respective diocesan ordinary can restrain such professors or masters of faculty from the teaching of such subjects.

As a result of the Concordat of 1887, the work of the Jesuits, the Dominicans, and the Franciscans flourished at the turn of the 20th century, and other orders, such as the Christian and Marist Brothers, the Silesian Fathers, the Sisters of the Presentation, the

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<sup>13</sup>Holt, op. cit., pp. 21, 28, and 174.

Sisters of Vincent de Paul, and the Daughters of Mary also entered the field. In addition, the government restored properties to the church which had been confiscated 25 years earlier. Today colegios conducted by these orders have a strong influence in educational affairs.<sup>15</sup> The agreement with the Holy See placed responsibility for education largely in the hands of the church, which concentrated its efforts almost exclusively on secondary and higher education for men. In fact, the church, as a matter of principle, opposed secondary education for girls.<sup>16</sup>

#### The Twentieth Century

During the nineteenth century, extension of education had become official government policy, although the persistence of oligarchial social traditions and political unrest had prevented its implementation. Law 39 of 1903 is an important landmark, for it divided Colombian public education into elementary, secondary, professional, industrial, and artistic sectors. The Zerda plan of 1893 had earlier established a pattern of five years for normal schools. Under 1903 and 1904 legislation, elementary education was declared free but not compulsory, and was placed under the charge of the various departments and their respective assemblies, although the national government was still to inspect them. Secondary

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<sup>15</sup> Rafael Bernal Medina, "Educational Relations between the Church and the Government of Colombia," in George Bereday and Joseph Lauwers, Editors, The World Yearbook of Education, 1966, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966, p. 362.

<sup>16</sup> Holt, op. cit., p. 176.

education continued to be a responsibility of the national government and was subject likewise to the national inspectors. Industrial and professional education was to be paid for by the national government or the departments. President Rafael Reyes (1904-1909), a progressive Conservative, introduced effective normal schools, and another Conservative, Carlos E. Restrepo (1910-1914), who had been Rector of the University of Antioquia before assuming the presidency of the nation, created a more effective Inspector Generalship of Education. They both worked diligently to secure greater control over the schools. In 1909 a law was passed giving the schools additional income from taxes levied on liquor and the slaughtering of beef cattle.

Despite these facts, educational progress was not impressive. Ninety percent of the 1924 population was estimated to be illiterate, and only 17,000 boys out of the total 6.5 million population were enrolled in secondary schools.

Inspection as a basis for maintenance of quality in education and compliance with the law had existed since 1870 on the departmental level, but it was not until 1931 that a national system of school inspection was decreed. Since inspection serves as the principal link between the national government and the educators, its role was more fully defined in 1936 by legislation. Augustín Nieto Caballero was the first national inspector, and he served as an important stimulus to progress during his four years of tenure. He called for the replacing of rote instruction with modern teaching methods and practical subject matter, and encouraged the Belgian Ovidio Decroly to make his views more widely known. Decroly had come to Colombia in 1925 at Nieto Caballero's invitation. He was principally interested

in preparing children for effective living, emphasizing "centers of interest" and the "whole" or global method of elementary instruction -- a method which sought to integrate subject matter with the life experiences of the child.<sup>17</sup> This effort largely declined in the 1940's due to poorly-trained teachers and the unsuitability of many of his ideas to traditional Colombian culture.

In 1924, under the administration of President Pedro Nel Ospina, a second German mission was invited. The three experts of the mission were chosen not only because they were able educators, but also because they were good Catholics. Their principal purpose was to plan, with the advice of Colombian experts, an educational program which could be enacted into law. The plan they proposed encountered serious opposition when it sought to reduce the number of Colombian universities, which at that time were five times more numerous than Germany's. They also encountered church opposition to their secondary education reforms.<sup>18</sup>

One minor result of their efforts was the passage of legislation which made elementary education compulsory. Law 56 of 1927 made parents responsible for sending their children to school. This obligation, however, was invalidated if there was no free school located within two-and-one-half kilometers from the child's home. Decree 1790 of 1930 required owners of haciendas to provide school facilities where there were more than 20 children of school age.

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<sup>17</sup> Bohórquez, op. cit., pp. 438-39.

<sup>18</sup> Empímaco Cabarico, Política Pedagógica de la Nación Colombiana, Bogota: Escuela Tipográfica Salesiana, 1952, p. 100-104.

Olaya Herrera's Liberal administration (1930-1934) invited another German educational mission in 1934 to help reorganize the nation's schools. Fewer than 18,000 boys were enrolled in secondary schools at that time. The resulting reforms led later to the provision of secondary education for girls. Law 32 of 1936 ordered that no educational establishment, public or private, should deny education to students for reasons of birth or social or religious affiliation. A 1945 law established that businesses with more than one million pesos capital be required to support elementary schools for the children of workers if there are more than 20 and if the place of work is more than two kilometers from a school.

Institutions such as the church and the army once had the right to try their own misbehaving members and apply their own laws, to the exclusion of other legislation. In the formal sense this practice has long since disappeared, but the attitude that justified it survives in the commonly encountered attitude which holds that no one general law applies to all individuals. Instead, the individual is relegated to the group to which he belongs. As a result, a political leader, especially on the departmental or local level, seeks to demonstrate his influence by shielding his supporters from the rigorous application of the laws, while at the same time making his opponents feel the full weight of the legal system.<sup>19</sup> This helps to explain why legislation setting forth minimum educational standards or requiring private employers to establish elementary schools is inconsistently enforced. In the Colombian view the special situation calls for special exemptions.

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<sup>19</sup> Legters, op. cit., pp. 120-21.

Church Influence

The role of the Roman Catholic Church was somewhat altered in 1936 when Liberal President Alfonso López disestablished it and took away its control over education. This was further formalized by another Liberal, Eduardo Santos, who negotiated a new agreement with the Vatican in 1942 which modified the Concordat of 1887. The principal changes were designed to end clerical control of education (at least in a formal sense) and to stipulate that bishops must be Colombian citizens approved by the government. Nevertheless, the preamble to the Constitution was revised in 1957 to read

In the name of God, supreme source of all authority, and with the purpose of securing national unity, one of the bases of which is the recognition by the political parties that the Apostolic Roman Catholic religion is that of the nation, and that as such the public powers will protect it and will see that it is respected as an essential element of social order. . . .

The constitution then stated:

No one will be molested by reason of his religious opinions, nor compelled to confess his beliefs, nor to observe practices contrary to his conscience.

Liberty is guaranteed to all religious sects that are not contrary to Christian morality or to the laws. Acts contrary to Christian morality or subversive of public order which are carried out on the pretext of a religious exercise are subject to the common law. . . .

The priestly ministry is incompatible with the discharge of public office. Nevertheless, Catholic priests may be employed in public instruction or charity.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Holt, op. cit.

Other Developments. The period from 1930 to 1950 foreshadowed the educational growth that was to come. Its features included: (1) the expansion of private secondary education, (2) the introduction of compulsory elementary education (at least in theory), (3) the reduction of elementary education from six to a more realistic four years, (4) the obligation of private businesses to provide educational opportunities, (5) the creation of complementary schools with a predominantly practical orientation, (6) government intervention designed to unify plans and programs, (7) the establishment of national supervision of education, (8) the founding of many elementary and secondary schools, (9) the expansion at the secondary level of technical education for industrial and agricultural activities, (10) the development of normal schools designed specifically to prepare teachers who could deal with rural problems, and (11) in higher education the beginnings (in 1935) of autonomy for the national university.

Developments since 1950 include the rapid expansion of secondary night schools primarily serving working people, and the creation of the Colombian Institute for Technical Specialization Abroad (ICETEX) and the National Apprenticeship Service (SENA) -- the former to develop professional leadership and the latter to develop skilled workers. A series of five-year plans contributed to more rational direction of educational efforts. Secondary education was divided into a basic and an advanced cycle to discourage dropouts and to encourage more effective specialization in practical fields such as

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<sup>21</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Volume I., op. cit., p. 22.

industry, business, agriculture, and teaching. Beginning in 1960, efforts were made to aid the departments and municipalities in meeting more effectively the cost of elementary education.

A distinction was made by the 1903 legislation between urban and rural elementary education. This distinction was rescinded in 1932, reinstated in 1950, and finally removed in 1963. Efforts were being made to provide rural citizens with educational opportunities roughly comparable to those in urban areas. Since the 1940's, the number of well-educated persons outside the upper classes had reached a significant proportion, although in many respects the elementary and secondary curricula are still suited primarily to the needs of those who plan to undertake university studies. Education has been recognized as one of man's fundamental rights, as established by the United Nations Charter and adopted by Colombia. Schooling and technical training are being increasingly accepted by Colombian authorities as instruments of economic growth.

Since the Catholic hierarchy has adopted a more flexible attitude toward the teaching of many subjects, especially the natural and social sciences, the introduction of scientific and practical subjects has encountered relatively little opposition from the church during the past decade. The upper ranks of the church are convinced that they must do more than they are now doing to meet the nation's social responsibilities, and they are inclined to accept the philosophy embodied in the encyclicals of Pope John and the Second Vatican Council. At the same time, Catholic leaders frequently encounter striking difficulties in communicating the new social humanism to their parish priests. Not only is there an insufficient number of

priests to administer to the country's religious needs (especially in the smaller towns), but too many priests themselves have limited education and know little more than their ritual responsibilities. Then, too, because local priests are often dependent upon local landowners for their small incomes, they naturally tend to reflect the conservatism of their wealthy parishioners.<sup>22</sup> Despite these difficulties, however, the church's People's Community Action Program (Acción Cultural Popular) has made significant strides since its founding more than 20 years ago.

Many of the country's better known intellectual and political leaders, including Germán Arciniegas, Gabriel Betancur Mejía, Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, Guillermo Nannetti, Abel Naranjo Villegas, Augustín Nieto Caballero, and Eduardo Zuleta Angel have been prominent either as ministers of education or as educational leaders. In general, they have reflected the enlightened views of the elite class and have sustained national concern for the needs of public education.

Considerable progress has taken place. For one thing, the percentage of the budget allocated to education has increased substantially in the past ten years. In addition, between 1955 and 1965, elementary enrollments increased 184 percent, secondary enrollments 300 percent, and higher education enrollments 331 percent. Illiteracy has steadily declined from 48 percent of those over seven years of age in 1938 to 31 percent in 1964. Compared with Colombia's earlier educational history, these are indeed giant strides forward.

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<sup>22</sup>Holt, op. cit., pp. 178-179.

## CHAPTER 4

### SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

#### Organization

The national government has been responsible for educational plans, programs, and activities since the Ministry of Public Instruction was created in 1903. The Colombian Constitution, however, sets forth certain basic principles concerning education. For example, article 41 states:<sup>1</sup>

Freedom of teaching is guaranteed. The state shall have, nevertheless, supreme inspection and vigilance of teaching institutions, both public and private, in order to secure a fulfillment of the social ends of general culture and the best intellectual, moral, and physical development of those who are educated.

Elementary education shall be free in state institutions, and compulsory to the extent that the law requires.

Because the national government has primary responsibility in education, it exercises control over various government schools, over private education, and over education given by the Roman Catholic Church (with the exception of the training of priests and other religious personnel). This authority extends from the President to the Minister of Education, and from him by delegation to the

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<sup>1</sup>Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, op. cit., pp. 24-25.

departments, the municipalities, and the Colombian Association of Universities. Approval of national plans, the taking over of schools by the national government, and budget allocations for education all depend upon decisions made by the national congress.<sup>2</sup>

Control of education rests with the Ministry of National Education. It performs the following functions: devises plans and programs of study, establishes conditions under which schools are to operate, exercises direct supervision and inspection of the schools, pays a large part of the salaries of elementary teachers in departments and municipalities, pays the operating expenses of nationally administered elementary and secondary schools and universities, constructs a large majority of public school buildings, contributes toward the cost of construction of educational establishments through community action, finances education in the national territories, and assists private institutions. Each of the 22 departments and the special district (Bogota) has a secretary of education charged with carrying out autonomously all of the administrative aspects of education in his jurisdiction, in accordance with standards established by the Ministry of National Education. The secretary of education in each department is named by the respective governor of that department without interference from the Ministry of National Education. Departmental legislators are responsible for establishing new schools under departmental jurisdiction and for providing sufficient funds to enable them to function properly.<sup>3</sup>

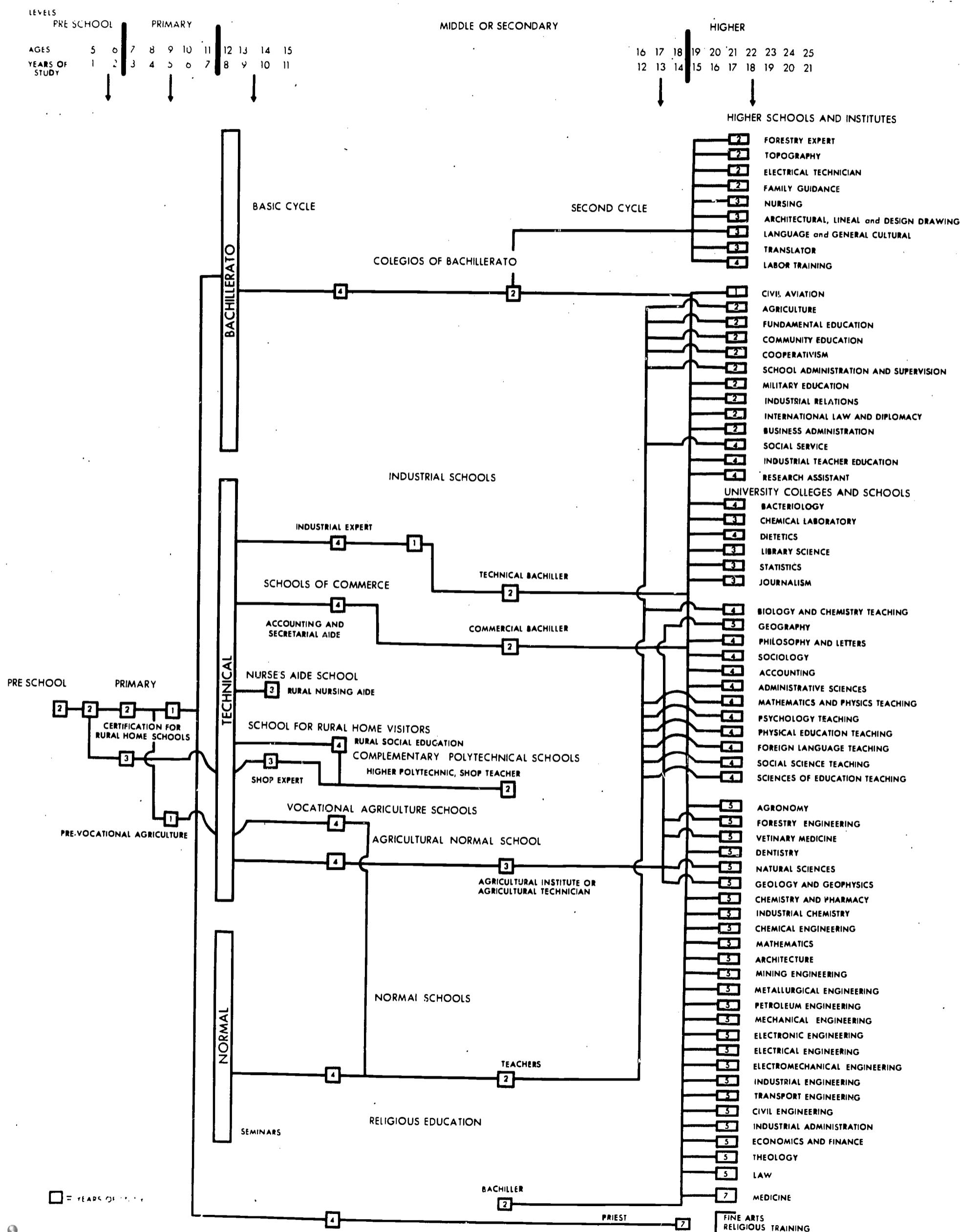
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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 28-29.

Figure 1

# STRUCTURE OF THE COLOMBIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM



Structure of the Ministry of National Education. The Ministry of National Education is headed by a Minister of Education and a Secretary-General, both of whom are essentially political appointments. They are aided by the Director of the Ministry, who is a career official responsible for the technical aspects of educational policy and the Office of Inspection, which is responsible for insuring maintenance of technical and administrative standards adopted by the Ministry of Education and the Office of Planning, Coordination, and Evaluation.

Operationally the Ministry is divided into two main branches -- technical and administrative. The technical department contains six divisions: (1) elementary and literacy education; (2) secondary education; (3) non-university higher education and teacher training; (4) cultural development; (5) technical and professional services; and (6) development of education. The administrative department has three divisions which are responsible respectively for personnel, budgetary matters, and general services. The Ministry is advised by such bodies as the National Council of Education, the National Council for Scientific Research, and a number of internal coordinating committees.<sup>4</sup>

Administrative Functions. The Ministry's principal administrative responsibilities are: to carry out the national educational and administrative policy for the adoption of professional standards in

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<sup>4</sup> Unesco, World Survey of Education, Higher Education, Vol. IV, New York: 1966, p. 341 and Instituto Interamericano de Ciencias Agricolas, Organización Administrativa del Sector Agropecuario de Colombia, Vol. II, Bogota: Proyecto 206 de la OEA, Zona Andina, Centro Interamericano de Reforma Agraria, December, 1966, p. 76.

education, to plan the development of education at all educational and governmental levels, to oversee and evaluate the effectiveness of educational programs, to coordinate the progress of programs with the entities responsible for their development, to administer educational institutions belonging to the national government, to finance educational projects for which the national government is responsible, to prepare and administer the national education budget, and to name the administrative and teaching personnel in national education institutions and programs.<sup>5</sup>

The Ministry of Education also specifies the curricula of both public and private schools, controls the preparation and administration of the examinations at the end of the year, specifies the academic grading system to be used in the schools, controls the selection of texts, and provides a system of inspection to insure the observance of its regulations. Public schools in territories without self-government are operated by Catholic religious orders.

Recent Reforms. A great many changes have taken place in recent years in Colombian educational administration. In 1956 an Office of Planning, Coordination, and Evaluation was added to the Ministry to coordinate the various levels of the system and to organize the testing of new curricula. Decree 1637 of 1960 reorganized the Ministry of Education, making it responsible for all business relating to the development, regulation, and inspection of education and for the promotion and diffusion of culture and science, consistent with the

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<sup>5</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, op. cit., pp. 74-75.

Constitution, the laws, and published documents on the subject. Most of the key positions in the Ministry of Education had customarily been filled by political appointment, but in 1960 the Lleras government decided to appoint all personnel except the Minister and the Secretary-General based on Civil Service regulations.<sup>6</sup>

Law 111 of 1960 made the national government responsible as of December 31, 1964 for the payment of the salaries of all the public elementary school teachers in the country. The government has been gradually assuming this responsibility ever since the law was first enacted. At the same time, the Ministry of Education favors greater administrative decentralization. The procedure under discussion is to have policies made at the national level and administration carried out at the departmental and municipal levels. This will give departmental secretaries of education more power to make decisions in implementing policy. This in turn will stimulate greater initiative and responsibility for schooling on the local level and relegate to the Ministry the right to determine if the department is qualified to administer its schools.

In addition to ties with its own schools and departmental secretaries of education, the Ministry of Education has dealings with the administrative department of the Civil Service (in the selection of personnel), and with the Colombian Agricultural Institute (ICA), the Office of Joint Educational Programs (OAPEC), the Colombian Association of Universities, Unesco, various American foundations,

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<sup>6</sup> Legters, op. cit., p. 153.

international advisory missions in education from the United States and Europe, the National Apprenticeship Service (SENA), the Colombian Institute of Agrarian Reform (INCORA), and many others. There is constant effort to coordinate these activities more effectively. On July 6, 1968 a decree (known as *Integración de Funciones de la Administración Pública*), designed to establish a common administrative basis for all ministries and other agencies was promulgated. This will affect educational development by linking the Ministry of Education's planning office with the nation's general planning office and eventually will result in better coordination within the Ministry itself.

The Minister of Education until September, 1968, Gabriel Betancur Mejía, has been noted for his outstanding record and his desire to choose personnel for their professional rather than their political qualifications. Betancur received his doctorate in law and economics from the Javeriana University in 1942, and his Master's degree in economics and public administration from Syracuse University in 1945. His thesis was a blueprint for Colombia's now-famous foreign technical training program known as ICETEX. He also received a Master's degree in international law from Johns Hopkins University and took specialized training courses with the National City Bank in New York while serving first as commercial attaché and later as economic counselor at the Colombian Embassy in Washington. He then became secretary-general of the National Association of Industrialists in Medellin, Colombia, and served in several international capacities in Europe and the United Nations. He was first appointed Minister of National Education in 1955 by Rojas Pinilla and then in 1957 was named Director of ICETEX, which he had established earlier. He has also been vice-president of the

Colombian Council of National Planning, a Subdirector-General of Unesco in Paris, and director of the Special Commission for Education with the Alliance for Progress. In 1963 he served as Director-General of the Colombian Association of Universities and the National University Fund. In August, 1966, he again became Minister of Education. Betancur has been described as intellectual and methodical, a man of few words who studies issues slowly but profoundly. Disliking improvisation and superficiality, he is an avid supporter of educational planning. He was regarded as by far the most technically competent Minister of Education the country has ever had.<sup>7</sup>

Departmental (State) Education. Each of Colombia's political subdivisions (departments, intendencias, and comisarías) has a secretariat of education whose secretary is named by the governor, intendente, or comisario. The secretary has the chief educational responsibilities within his territory. Although the secretary is required to comply with the mandates of the Ministry of Education, actual ties between the departments and the national government are relatively weak.<sup>8</sup>

Departmental secretariats have the following responsibilities: naming teachers in departmental schools, making up the difference between available national government funds and current obligations, paying supervisory expenses, maintaining public school plants, and

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<sup>7</sup> Gabriel Betancur Mejía, "Transformación Educativa en Marcha," El Catolicismo, Epoca VII, November 19, 1967, p. 12. The new minister is Octavio Arizmendi Posada, an economist and former governor of the department of Antioquia.

<sup>8</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, op. cit., p. 76.

providing some of the materials needed for teaching.<sup>9</sup> The departmental secretariat of education is responsible for maintaining the elementary, secondary, and higher education facilities belonging to the department. It also contributes to the construction costs of some school facilities.

Cities over 100,000 population have secretariats of education with a similar organization. The city of Cali, for example, is divided into eight school zones; the department of Valle del Cauca has three school zones. Except in the larger cities, municipal government has comparatively little responsibility for the administration of education. Colombia has 891 municipalities (municipios), of which 96 percent have fewer than 50,000 inhabitants, representing about 61 percent of the nation's population. There are 33 municipalities with between 50,000 and 500,000 people, making up 18.5 percent of the population; four cities with over 500,000 population make up the balance. The educational responsibility of most of these municipalities consists primarily of providing sites for new schools and then furnishing and maintaining them. In 1965 the municipalities contributed only 3.7 percent of all public educational expenses. Municipal councils are charged with providing the necessary funds and assign the mayor to act as their administrative agent.<sup>10</sup>

Departmental expenditures in general increased 17.6 percent between 1960 and 1965 (on the basis of constant prices based on the

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<sup>9</sup> Pedro Gómez Valderrama, El Desarrollo Educativo, Vol. II, Bogota: Memoria al Congreso Nacional de 1963, Imprenta Nacional, 1964, p. 42.

<sup>10</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, op. cit., pp. 29-30.

1965 value of the peso), but departmental expenditures for education increased only 9.4 percent. Departmental support for education varies considerably from department to department. For example, 43 percent of Atlántico's total budget was spent on education in 1965, while Cauca spent only 17.3 percent.<sup>11</sup>

General Regulatory Controls. The Colombian constitution guarantees freedom for private ownership and operation of schools. Such schools, must however, be licensed. A new kindergarten, for example, must present a request to the Secretary of Education, together with proof of the professional qualifications of the director, including his years of experience in pre-school education and evidence of his attendance at suitable short courses directed or approved by the Ministry of Education. In addition, the school premises must be approved for cleanliness, adequacy of furnishings, and general comfort. A private elementary school must go even further. Not only must the director and each of the teachers be qualified, but the number of teachers must also be enough for the enrollment, the minimum legal salaries must be paid, and official programs must be followed, while the schools must meet established standards for facilities and hygiene. Private secondary school regulations stress the importance of observing official plans, courses, and programs. Up-to-date records must be kept, as designated by government regulations.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, op. cit., Estadísticas Educativas y Económicas, Vol. VIII, p. 168-70.

<sup>12</sup>Bernal Escobar, op. cit., pp. 90-92.

Because they serve as a relatively attractive route to white-collar jobs, commercial schools are frequently excellent profit-making ventures. Since there is a natural tendency to cut costs and standards to the bone, government regulation of these is particularly explicit. In addition to the points previously mentioned, commercial schools must possess adequate technical and instructional equipment, and they must fulfill (in the judgment of the Ministry of Education's Office of Inspection) specified conditions of pedagogical organization, pupil classification, spirit of work, discipline, and moral instruction. No class may exceed 35 students, and misleading advertising to obtain students is expressly prohibited.<sup>13</sup>

#### Supervision and Inspection

Supervision functions on both the national and the departmental level. The supervisor's job is to evaluate and guide educational institutions in desirable directions. He seeks also to encourage self-evaluation, but at present there is almost a total lack of this activity. Despite the existence of a few training programs for supervisors, there are scarcely any opportunities to function in this capacity. The following career pattern is a common one: a teacher, after long years of experience, becomes principal (rector) of his school. He then moves up to become a national inspector. Although there is general agreement that inspectors might also serve effectively in supervisory capacities, several factors prevent this dual responsibility from working out in practice: First, the majority of national

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<sup>13</sup>Decree 2117 of August 1, 1962.

inspectors have passed their most dynamic and productive periods of service; therefore, they tend to employ "bureaucratic experience" in dealing with teachers and are temperamentally unsuited to encourage creative teaching. Furthermore, such a large number of new schools are being established that there is little time for inspector-supervisors to conduct more than a "police action" to see that the Ministry's minimum standards are not violated. The national government has given the departments the responsibility for granting licenses to elementary and secondary schools; but generally the secondary schools have failed to establish adequate minimum standards; in addition, with a few exceptions, departmental secretariats of education are much too responsive to local politics.<sup>14</sup>

The program for inspection and supervision needs further improvement, especially since in general elementary school inspectors are paid slightly less than the teachers they supervise and the majority of departmental supervisors are political appointees. Inspection and supervision on the Ministry of National Education level are separated administratively from the departments administering elementary and secondary school programs, thus making liaison between them relatively ineffective.

In 1962 the country was divided into six inspection zones, each with work groups for (1) approval of studies, (2) supervision, and (3) auxiliary services. Each zone has about five elementary and ten secondary inspectors plus one administrator, making a total of 97 at

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<sup>14</sup> Daniel Arango, Informe del Ministro de Educación al Congreso Nacional, Bogota: Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 1966, pp. 55-57.

the national level. Departmental and municipal inspectors are usually more plentiful, especially on the elementary level. To qualify as a national inspector of elementary education, a departmental inspector of education, or a director of training schools, pedagogical institutes, or normal schools, one must be registered in the first category of the national elementary certification schedule (escalafón).<sup>15</sup>

The Inspector's role is primarily one of seeing that particular minimum standards are being met, since he has little time to serve in a supervisory capacity. On the secondary level in the 1960's there was only one national inspector for every 37 schools (417 teachers). In 1963, 60 inspectors produced only 950 written reports, suggesting an average of only 16 visits annually. Many inspectors have other responsibilities as well, including the preparation and administration of final examinations.<sup>16</sup>

Inspectors spend approximately 90 percent of their time on visits to schools seeking Ministry approval. In a recent eighteen month period, 236 elementary, 542 secondary, and 36 normal schools received communications from the Ministry denying them official approval while during the same period 110 elementary, 129 secondary, and 9 normal schools were granted complete or provisional approval.<sup>17</sup> Standards of approval are

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<sup>15</sup> Ventura Bermúdez Hernández, Código del Maestro, Bogota: Editorial Tipográfica Hispana, 1967, p. 48.

<sup>16</sup> Glenn F. Varner, Educación Secundaria en Colombia, Bogota: n. d. (ca. 1965), pp. 27-28.

<sup>17</sup> Pedro Gómez Valderrama, Memoria del Ministro de Educación Nacional Vol. IV, Bogota: Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 1967, p. 92.

more lenient for private secondary schools because the law requires that only half the teachers must be certified.<sup>18</sup>

### Finance

Expenditures. Before the 1957 plebiscite set aside 10 percent of the general budget for public education, percentages allotted to education ranged from 4 to 6 percent.<sup>19</sup> The national budget for 1968 totaled 6,272,000,000 pesos, of which nearly 17 percent (1,037,000,000 pesos) was earmarked for education. For the first time in the history of Colombia, education was given a larger budget allotment than any other Ministry.<sup>20</sup> Law 111 of 1960 ruled that the salaries of public elementary teachers should be paid by the central government, and steps were begun to fulfill this requirement over a four-year period. Partly due to the assumption of this new financial burden, the budget of the Ministry of National Education rose to 14.1 percent of the total in 1964, although in purchasing power the total national expenditures for 1964 (not shown) were substantially less than for 1963 and 1965. A summary of recent trends in expenditures in the Ministry of Education is given in Table 1.

Compared with departments and municipalities, the national government makes the largest contribution to education, with 57.4 percent of the total. This compares with 38.9 percent for departments and 3.7

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<sup>18</sup> Varner, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>19</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., pp. 92-93.

<sup>20</sup> Actualidades, Pan American Union, Department of Educational Affairs, January, 1967, p. 4. The 1969 budget of 11,000,000,000 pesos allocated 12.5% (1,386,000,000 pesos) for education.

TABLE 1  
**GENERAL AND EDUCATIONAL EXPENDITURES<sup>21</sup>**  
 (Inflation Correction to the 1958 Value of the Peso)  
 Expressed in Millions of Pesos

	1961	1963	1965
Total national expenses	2,449.3	2,058.1	2,482.0
Total educational expenses	242.6	275.9	334.3
General administration	5.4	5.3	5.0
Elementary and literacy education	38.2	100.9	119.4
Secondary education	20.2	22.7	24.8
Normal education	13.4	10.6	10.7
Higher education	3.1	2.7	4.3
Cultural extension	2.6	.7	.7
Scholarships and meals	3.8	6.6	13.8
Transfers to departments and institutions	104.4	89.6	122.1
Other expenses	.8	.4	.8
Total operating expenses	191.7	239.5	301.6
Elementary	24.3	27.8	18.7
Secondary	21.8	6.4	9.9
Higher	.6	1.7	1.2
Other investments	4.2	.6	2.8
Total expenses of investment	50.8	36.4	32.6

<sup>21</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. VIII, op. cit., p. 158.

percent for municipalities. At the same time, the average departmental expenditures for education (as compared with those for other purposes) were proportionally greater in 1965, at 22.0 percent, as compared with 13.5 percent for the nation and 3.5 percent for municipalities. The national percentage increased to 17.3 in 1966.<sup>22</sup>

The range of national contributions to departments in 1965 varied from 52 to 33 pesos per student. Departmental contributions ranged from 56 to 44 pesos per student. Municipalities varied from 11 to 4 pesos.<sup>23</sup>

Although the 1960 law requiring the national government to pay elementary school teachers' salaries was in full effect by 1964, the government made only a limited contribution to salaries for teachers on the payroll in December, 1960, leaving the difference to be made up by the departments. In general, departmental financial support for education declined somewhat between 1960 and 1965. In Antioquia, however, educational expenditures increased 51.8 percent, while total departmental expenditures increased only 18.1 percent.<sup>24</sup>

Elementary Education. About 85 percent of the cost of elementary education goes to salaries. The legislation of 1903 set the following standards: the national government would build the schools, the department would pay the salaries, and the municipality would contribute the sites. This tradition is no longer applicable because the national

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<sup>22</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, op. cit., Antecedentes Generales, Parte B, Vol. II, pp. 1-2.

<sup>23</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. VIII, op. cit., p. 208.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 162.

government now pays much more than its original share. Not only has it assumed responsibility for the payment of teachers' salaries, but it has also assumed the burden of paying approximately 75 percent of the cost of new school construction, as well as maintenance, supervisory, and administrative salaries.

Secondary Education. About 55 percent of secondary education's support in 1965 came from departmental budgets, although public secondary schools in Colombia may be supported by any of the three levels of government. Salaries and conditions of employment consequently vary considerably. A foreign loan for 7.6 million dollars to help build nineteen new national secondary schools was approved in 1968. Schools administered by the Ministry of National Education do not need special approval to function, but municipal schools need not only departmental approval in order to operate, but also require national approval in order to receive recognition of their degrees and certificates.

Universities. Decree 0136 of 1958 specified that the National University receive 15 percent of the Ministry of Education budget. Decree Law 277 of 1958 granted not less than 10 percent of the Ministry's budget to departmental universities and 2 percent to private universities. These funds are now distributed by the National Council of Rectors, which is affiliated with the Colombian Association of Universities.<sup>25</sup> Not less than 1 percent of the annual budget of the

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<sup>25</sup>Arango, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

Ministry is allocated to the National University Fund and each university contributes  $2\frac{1}{2}$  percent of its annual appropriation from the national government.<sup>26</sup>

### Scholarships

According to Decree 156 of 1967, official elementary education is completely free of cost; secondary education tuition varies according to parental income and net worth according to progressively graduated rates. Some 20,000,000 pesos were designated for secondary scholarships in 1967.<sup>27</sup> These are distributed regionally from national, departmental, and municipal scholarship budgets on the basis of student grades and need. About one-sixth of secondary scholarships are granted for study in private institutions, and about one-fourth of all secondary students, public and private have scholarships covering tuition and/or dormitory and board.<sup>28</sup>

### School Construction

Construction of public schools, originally the responsibility of the municipalities, was assumed by the national government in 1961. To show to what extent it has taken over -- in 1964 the Administrative Office for Joint Educational Programs (OAPEC) constructed 935 classrooms,

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<sup>26</sup> Pan American Union, Highlights of Education in Colombia, Washington, D. C.: Department of Educational Affairs, 1967, p. 12.

<sup>27</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I., op. cit., p. 68.

<sup>28</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., pp. 218-19.

each designed for 40 children.<sup>29</sup> OAPEC is integrated with the Division of School Development, and jointly they operate as an organ of the Ministry of Education (in accordance with a 1965 resolution) under the direction of a central committee similar to that of the autonomous institutes. Until 1964 OAPEC was concerned exclusively with elementary schools plus a few normal schools; since then, its efforts have been extended to secondary school construction. It now provides services in the fields of school design, materials, budgeting and contracting, auditing, and community action. School maintenance services are scheduled to begin as an additional function in 1968.

In addition to its school construction duties, OAPEC participates in the training of in-service teachers by offering special courses. Moreover, in collaboration with the National Institute for the Preparation and Improvement of Teachers (INCADELMA), it also helps to prepare and select school texts. OAPEC has greater administrative flexibility than other organs of the Ministry of Education and correspondingly greater autonomy of operation.

#### Sources of School Support

The income of the Ministry of National Education is derived from a variety of general government tax revenue sources. One of these is a tax on imports and exports (which alone led to a 52 percent rise in ordinary revenues in 1966). In addition, in September, 1965, authorities again established an income tax surcharge. The rates were 15 percent

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<sup>29</sup> Gómez, Memoria, Vol. IV, op. cit., p. 19.

for 1965 and 10 percent for 1966. To strengthen the income tax structure, a withholding system was initiated in December, 1966, and new taxes on gasoline consumption and livestock investments were also imposed. By the end of September, 1967, ordinary tax revenues were 16 percent higher than in the first nine months of 1966.<sup>30</sup>

In 1968, 1,217,400,000 pesos were requested by the Ministry of Education for its budget. This was a substantial increase over the 1967 budget of 1,037,432,364 pesos. Increased liquor and tobacco taxes were asked for, to be specifically designated for schools. The government's tax on liquor sales in 1966 was expected to bring in 120,000,000 pesos.<sup>31</sup> There was also a request before the legislature to increase the land tax by 2 mills in order to strengthen departmental and municipal contributions to education. Large landowners, however, have usually supported national prohibitions which prevent people in local administrative districts (municipios) from levying any significant tax on land and other real estate. Thus it is difficult to muster local resources in support of schools and other public projects.<sup>32</sup>

In 1960, 30 percent of all revenue in the various departments was derived from state commercial monopolies, the majority of which were distilleries. In the absence of cash, some departments, such as Chocó, have paid teachers with bottles of aguardiente, which they in turn sold to the parents of their students.<sup>33</sup> In many departments, money received

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<sup>30</sup> Inter American Development Bank, op. cit., p. 107.

<sup>31</sup> Arango, op. cit., p. 66.

<sup>32</sup> T. Lynn Smith, Colombia: Social Structure and the Process of Development, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1967, p. 324.

<sup>33</sup> Legters, op. cit., p. 285.

from taxes goes into a general fund, and although certain of the tax revenue sources are designated for education, monthly expenditures may be dissipated by the local government for what seem to be more pressing needs, with the result that teachers' pay is frequently in arrears. There is usually no special fund for educational purposes. Other sources of tax revenue which have been proposed as a source of funds for education include a tax on foreign extractive industries which exploit the sub-soil and a tax on land not being used for any economically productive purpose.

Other Sources of Educational Support. Many governmental agencies and semi-autonomous public corporations also make contributions of educational importance. Every effort is made to coordinate their activities with those of the Ministry of National Education, although in a number of instances these efforts have not been successful. Some of the organizations making the largest financial contributions in 1965 are listed below:<sup>34</sup>

	Pesos
National Apprenticeship Service, to provide vocational and worker training	128,895,000
Ministry of Defense, to organize and administer secondary and university education for officers and literacy program for recruits	59,993,320
National Federation of Coffee Producers (Federación Nacional de Cafeteros), to maintain schools for children of coffee growers and to provide courses in farm management and home improvement	51,000,000
Similar work by the Institute of Tobacco Development	4,336,000

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<sup>34</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., pp. 90-91.

National Police, to provide courses on public administration	26,435,641
Ministry of Health, to organize and administer courses in public health and first aid	16,616,182
Ministry of Justice, to provide elementary education to help rehabilitate juveniles	14,846,760
Ministry of Government, to provide courses to train leaders in community action	12,731,840
Colombian Petroleum Company (Ecopetrol), to support primary and secondary schools for the children of employees	9,704,147
Ministry of Agriculture, to organize and administer courses in agricultural extension for farm leaders	4,495,941
<p>The first of these, the National Apprenticeship Service (SENA), was independently financed by a payroll tax on employees and had the advantage of having its income increase along with economic growth and inflation. The Ministry of Education is handicapped by its responsibility for increasing numbers of students, without the guarantee of increased sources of financial support.</p>	

#### Enrollment Characteristics

In 1967, 81 percent of public and private school enrollments (2,525,678) were on the elementary level, 17 percent (553,000) on the secondary level, and 2 percent (59,205) in higher education. A comparison of enrollments as indicated by the censuses of 1951 and 1964 is shown in Table 2.

Although elementary education is free in the public schools, about one-fourth of the school-age children do not enroll. In Bogota,

TABLE 2

EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE COLOMBIAN POPULATION  
OVER SEVEN YEARS OF AGE<sup>35</sup>  
(Thousands of Persons)

Level	Grade	1951	%	1964	%
Elementary	1st	750,738	8.97	1,463,491	11.13
	2nd	1,047,695	12.52	1,969,607	14.98
	3rd	937,573	11.20	1,776,225	13.51
	4th	802,675	9.59	1,264,412	9.62
	5th	495,433	5.92	1,209,512	9.20
Middle or secondary	I	101,286	1.21	261,339	1.99
	II	128,219	1.53	237,002	1.80
	III	104,276	1.25	184,457	1.40
	IV	81,078	0.97	140,411	1.07
	V	47,828	0.57	75,631	0.58
	VI	52,990	0.63	124,826	0.95
University	1st	5,285	0.06	15,892	0.12
	2nd	7,226	0.09	14,455	0.11
	3rd	5,711	0.07	12,527	0.10
	4th	6,800	0.08	13,864	0.11
	5th	9,516	0.11	22,735	0.17
	6th	12,105	0.14	24,414	0.19
Other education		72,931	0.89	282,106	2.14
Population with schooling		4,669,365	55.80	9,092,906	69.17
Illiterates		3,701,946	44.20	4,053,459	30.83
Total		8,371,311	100.0	13,146,365	100.0
Average level of schooling attained		1.9		2.4	

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp. 104-5. The population under seven years of age with schooling is negligible.

74 percent of elementary school children (ages seven to twelve) were in school in 1965; on the secondary level (ages thirteen to nineteen), 31 percent of the population was in school. In Cali and Medellin, roughly similar patterns prevail.

The average level of schooling in 1951 was 1.9 years. This climbed to 2.4 in 1964, although there was considerable variation around the country. Bogota reported 4.2 years, Atlántico 3.1, Valle 3.1, Antioquia 3.0, Boyacá 2.1, Córdoba 1.8, and Chocó (the lowest) 1.4.<sup>36</sup>

#### Calendar and Routines

Calendar. Decree 1710 of 1963 established a ten-month school year of 198 days including Saturdays, or 33 weeks not including holidays. Schools may choose either one of two calendars. The one most widely used begins during the first week in February and continues until about the third week in June, including a one-week Easter holiday. After a 16-day July and early August vacation, elementary schools resume until the first or second week in November.

An alternate calendar is favored in the southwest sector of Colombia, particularly in Valle, Cauca, Nariño, and the Comisarías del Putamayo, where the tradition dates back to the time when these were separate political units. The alternative calendar begins during the first week of October and continues until the third week in December. After a 23-day vacation period, classes reconvene in the second week of January and continue until the second week of July,

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 106.

with about 10 days off for Easter. Examinations for secondary schools continue for two weeks after the termination of classes.<sup>37</sup> Elementary and secondary public and private schools are expected to observe the calendar set by the Ministry of Education, unless special exemptions are granted. In practice, however, starting dates, late often as much as several weeks are common, and rural schools often close during harvest time. Special holidays also diminish the actual number of days in class.

Texts and Teaching Materials. In spite of campaigns by the government and the efforts of school inspectors, the availability of textbooks is limited except in some of the better state and private schools. Texts are usually purchased at local bookstores but prove to be too costly for many families. The Ministry of Education encourages teachers to use good supplementary instructional materials, but the majority of teachers favor the lecture method, combined with sufficient recitation to see if students remember the precise wording of their exposition. Although many of the better schools have science laboratory equipment, maps, etc., they are usually kept in locked cabinets or showcases rather than used in the instructional program. Teachers' manuals for elementary and secondary courses are generally of good quality.<sup>38</sup> Catholic schools use textbooks prepared by Catholic publishers. All textbooks must be adapted to the official course of studies and therefore are subject to the approval of the Ministry of Education.

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<sup>37</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Calendario Escolar, Bogota: División de Educación Elemental y Alfabetización, 1965, pp. 6-8.

<sup>38</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., pp. 71-72.

Schools are always conducted in Spanish, except for several institutions administered by foreign groups in which the language of the sponsor is used. There are relatively few unassimilated Indian groups which do not speak Spanish.<sup>39</sup> Courses that deal with the geography and history of Colombia, however, must be taught in Spanish by Colombian teachers.

### Problems

Despite the obvious ability of many Ministers of Education, their tenure has often been brief. There were 53 different ministers between 1935 and 1968, and quite a few were unacquainted with the problems of public education. This fact has hindered the coordination and planning of many well conceived programs. The Colombian Federation of Educators, a national teachers union, has complained that important educational decisions are being made by the Ministry of Education without sufficient consultation with teachers. As a result, they claim, some policies are ill-advised.<sup>40</sup>

Administrative paralysis is also a problem. On the one hand, the Colombian Constitution places responsibility on departmental governors and assemblies for the establishment of schools, for making teacher appointments, and for setting salaries; yet on the other, it delegates to the national government the task of financing and supervising a program over which it has very little real control. This apparent, but not effective, control of the national government over education in the

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<sup>39</sup> Gómez, El Desarrollo Educativo, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 56.

<sup>40</sup> Renovación Educativa, August 6, 1967, p. 4.

departmental schools leads to considerable waste and duplication of effort in the use of facilities, in addition to hindering effective planning.

There is a great need to integrate effectively those agencies which perform largely educational functions -- particularly ICETEX, SENA, and the National University Fund which sometimes work at cross purposes. The decree of July 6, 1968 seeks to correct this problem. Then, too, some of these agencies are blessed with more effective political and financial support than the Ministry of Education and are understandably not eager to share their resources.

Another source of improvement would be the suspension of governmental financial support to private schools. Church schools resent the relatively detailed regulation of their curricula by the Ministry of Education. Another proposal favors freeing the Ministry of Education from all routine administrative functions to allow it to operate more on the policy level. This, of course, would call for the delegation of greater responsibility for distributing national aid equitably to the departments. There is an even greater need to enforce the existing laws, many of which are constructive and desirable, but which are also infrequently or inadequately obeyed.<sup>41</sup> Finally, there is a need for the broader diffusion of a new concept of administrative leadership, a concept which places a higher value on competence than on political affiliation.

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<sup>41</sup> Primer Congreso Pedagógica Nacional, Carrera Profesional Docente, Comision IV, c.a. 1966, p. 2.

## CHAPTER 5

### PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Planning emphasizes the collection of data and the organization of activities so that problems may be either dealt with more effectively or avoided entirely. Planning also helps to identify problems and determine priorities. While no amount of planning research can decided whether improvement of elementary education is more important than expansion of university study, the data gathered can provide a more realistic basis for deciding where reform ought to begin.

Colombia's educational planners today face a great many developmental problems. Some of the more important ones identified by the Ministry of National Education are: (1) elimination of the shortage of elementary teachers and school buildings which has resulted from rapid population expansion, (2) creation of a technical diploma program for the last two or three years of secondary education, (3) elevation and expansion of normal schools from four or five years to the last two years of a six year secondary education program, (4) standardization of rural elementary schools to make them equivalent to urban schools, (5) encouragement of appropriate advanced study abroad by university professors, (6) improvement in both the system of supervision and the quality of administrative personnel, (7) improvement in the system of evaluation and promotion of students in order to stimulate higher levels of scholarship, (8) improvement in the system of distributing

scholarships, (9) revision of the curricula, especially in the large, new comprehensive national high schools, to make them more relevant to Colombian life and (10) preparation of a new teaching law for elementary and secondary education, so that only those teachers who possess the appropriate educational preparation can become certified.<sup>1</sup>

There are no reliable studies which show the relationship between general schooling and university level professional preparation. For example, only about 40 percent of the academic secondary graduates in 1964 entered the university, while another 20 percent pursued other types of higher education. One wonders why the percentage is not larger. One of the responsibilities of educational planners is to determine the relevancy of such information. Due to the extensive statistical information gathered by the Colombian government during the past decade, sufficient data are available for study and analysis. It is now necessary to interpret these data in order to point the way to a possible restructuring of the entire educational system.

#### Planning Efforts: Background

Shortages of foreign manufactured goods during World War II convinced many Colombians who had become accustomed to them and who had been trained abroad that they might successfully utilize in Colombia the manufacturing and economic skills of the developed nations. A pioneer effort to establish an institution which could relate these foreign skills to Colombian problems was the University of Los Andes

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<sup>1</sup>Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., pp. 24-26.

(Uniandes). Founded in 1949 by Mario Laserna, a graduate in mathematics from Columbia University, Los Andes was an admitted imitation on a smaller scale of the better features of United States higher education. Prominent features of its program were: general education rather than premature specialization, compulsory class attendance, and a credit system with electives, rather than the traditional fixed curriculum. Los Andes did much to stimulate study abroad through its program designed to prepare students for advanced study in foreign countries (especially the United States). Another function of the institution was to provide a higher education independent of the political and religious influences which at that time interfered with the integrity and effectiveness of instruction in so many Colombian universities.

Other major Colombian universities, are gradually adopting many of the practices of this pace-setting institution. Until the founding of the Institute for Advanced Training Abroad (ICETEX) in the 1950's, however, most of the positions of leadership and responsibility in Colombian development were limited to the economically privileged -- formerly the only group which had significant access to higher education. The University of Los Andes and ICETEX did much to foster the spirit of economic self-improvement which made Colombia the first Latin American country to prepare a basic educational plan (plan integral) -- a plan which has since become an example for other nations.

These initiatives were further supported by various studies of development carried on by foreign as well as Colombian specialists. In 1949 a mission of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, directed by economist Laughlin Currie in collaboration with the national government, prepared a study on economic development. The

Currie Plan stressed that if balanced development planning in education were to take place, a central team of planning specialists would have to be appointed to advise the Ministry of Education.

In 1956 the National Planning Committee employed the French economist Georges Celestín to make a study of the nation's educational problems. A report of the Ministry of Education by planning specialist Chailloux Dantéul reaffirmed a need for long-range planning, to put order and purpose into educational procedures. At about the same time, a mission directed by P. J. L. Lebret proposed a national educational development policy and provided much of the necessary background work for a fundamental educational reform. These studies resulted in efforts to change (at least in theory) the character and content of Colombian education. In response to such efforts, Betancur Mejía, the then Minister of Education, employed the services of Dr. Ricardo Díez Hochleitner to organize and direct basic educational planning. In 1957 decrees 206 and 2351 created the Office of Planning, composed of experts in various fields of education. This body proceeded to prepare the first five-year plan (in five volumes) based on the studies previously cited.<sup>2</sup>

Two direct results of these efforts followed: first, political leaders began to pay more attention to education and, second, the government decided to include an increase in the education budget in the plebiscite reform of 1958. In addition, the first five-year plan has been used as the basic element in restructuring and redirecting certain aspects of educational policy -- aspects which later were carried

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<sup>2</sup>Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 85.

out in practice. These include the creation of pilot schools for experimentation, the systematic training of school supervisors, the organization of intensive courses for secondary school graduates who want to enter teaching, further training for teachers who lack necessary diplomas, an increase in elementary education budgets, and a change in methods of finance. Unfortunately, economic and political considerations made it impossible to put the five-year plan into effect systematically.<sup>3</sup>

Many other reports and studies have reinforced these efforts. Among them are: the Study of the Conditions of Development in Colombia, the Report of the Colombian Delegation to the Conference on Education, Economic, and Social Development in Latin America, various memorias of the Ministry of Education to Congress, and Principal Project #1 of Unesco for Latin America on the improvement of basic education.

The international nature of the planning movement confers considerable prestige to the idea of full-time planners and thus exerts considerable pressure on a Latin American government to support planning efforts. This results in a great deal of formal government support of the idea of educational planning, without necessarily giving the needed political support or autonomy required to make the procedure function effectively.<sup>4</sup> There is little doubt that government support for planning is sincere in Colombia; however, lack of communication and consultation between government leaders and those who could make major contributions to the effective implementation of new programs is frequently cited as a serious weakness. Government leaders often hold posts because of

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 86-87.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 294-95.

their superior personal talents and high-level political affiliations. This makes consultation with subordinate professional groups sometimes seem to them to be inappropriate when implementation of worthwhile policy objectives is considered.

The Office of Planning in the Ministry of Education was established in 1957 and the five-year education plan was prepared. In 1958 a seminar on educational planning, participated in by all Latin American countries, was sponsored jointly by the government of Colombia, the Organization of American States, and Unesco. In 1960 the planning office was changed into the Office of Planning, Coordination, and Evaluation and was placed directly under the Minister of Education. In 1961 a General Development Plan was presented to the country, to be completed in ten years. In 1963 Colombia was the seat of the Third Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education.

Under the Alliance for Progress program, the following plans were envisaged for 1961-1965: construction and furnishing of some 22,000 classrooms, training of 9,540 teachers, further in-service training for 11,160 teachers already employed, and professional training of inspectors and school directors. One goal was an enrollment of 2,324,620 children in elementary school by 1965.<sup>5</sup> Difficulties were encountered, however, in the five-year plan in the early 1960's. These difficulties seemed to stem from two things: insufficient coordination with programs of social and economic development, and a lack of

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<sup>5</sup>W. O. Galbraith, Colombia: A General Survey, London: Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 58.

articulation between the Office of Planning and departmental secretariats of education.<sup>6</sup>

Decree 3248 of 1963 reorganized educational planning services and made them responsible directly to the Ministry of Education Cabinet. The decree established a staff of 23, 13 of them professionals. Their functions include (1) a nation-wide study of the educational and cultural problems and needs of the country, (2) preparation of both short-range and long-range programs for public and private education, (3) coordination of the work of the Ministry of Education, including the preparation of a projected budget for the Minister's approval, and (4) participation in the preparation of agreements and contracts arranged by the Ministry with international, departmental, municipal, and other agencies.<sup>7</sup>

In recent years, emphasis in the Office of Planning has been placed on the preparation of documents, reports and analytical studies which have been used by the various ministers of education in the determination of national educational policy. Yet, despite their importance, the functions of coordination and evaluation have not been implemented. The plans advanced by the Ministry of Education employ the National Development Plan as a point of departure. The Colombian Association of Universities has its own office of university planning and has carried out short-term plans for 1965-1968.

Many proposed reforms represent conclusions reached by full-time planners on the staff of the Ministry of Education. While their plans

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<sup>6</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 87.

<sup>7</sup> Gómez, El Desarrollo Educativo, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 106.

may not be as well-integrated as desirable, they do represent a combination of careful thought and political feasibility. Reforms put into effect by the Ministry of National Education in 1967 set in motion the following improvements: (1) a plan for a more intensive use of elementary schools (funcionamiento intensivo), permitting large increases in enrollment at negligible additional cost; (2) the establishment of double sessions, particularly in those secondary schools where demand is greatest; (3) the establishment of schools in rural areas where a single teacher is responsible for teaching all five grades (escuela unitaria); (4) coeducation in elementary schools where class enrollments are small; (5) an increase in the number of national government secondary schools (for which the 1968 budget proposes a sum of 78 million pesos); (6) regional integration of public schools sponsored by national, departmental and municipal governments; and (7) an increase in the 1968 budget of 700,000 pesos to be allocated for educational television in elementary schools.<sup>8</sup>

Other influences have served to elevate the status of planning. Fifteen years ago, there were no economics majors or departments to be found in Colombian universities; only two or three Colombians held degrees in the field. In addition, the nation had no departments of planning or statistics, and no cost-of-living index. Now there are 17 faculties (departments or colleges) of economics, with about 1500 students.<sup>9</sup> As a further indication of the recent prestige accorded to

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<sup>8</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 25.

<sup>9</sup> Laughlin Currie, La Esenanza de la Economía en Colombia, Bogota: Tercer Mundo, 1967, pp. 9-10.

economics as a basic element in planning, decree 1297 of 1964 permitted universities to confer the degree of economista as a professional degree, reserving the less prestigious licenciado for other similar fields of study.<sup>10</sup>

Both the defection of former priest Camilo Torres to the ranks of the anti-government forces, and his death in 1966 at the hands of government troops, aroused special concern on the part of the Catholic Church regarding questions of economic and educational development. The Church's Center for Research and Social Action (CIAS), founded in Bogota in 1944, has conducted in recent years 40 short courses and seminars attended by 791 priests. The Center, which has an 8,000-volume library, does socio-economic research designed to encourage constructive social change. The affiliated Institute of Doctrine and Social Studies (IDES), aided by German Catholics, began in 1968 teaching courses concerning social change in Latin America designed for professionals as well as for leaders of the poorer classes.<sup>11</sup>

#### Education and Development

The Colombian leadership now possesses a keener faith in the possibility of improving its nation through intelligent planning and managed growth than do many other Latin American countries with similar difficulties. This faith gives grounds for optimism, but certain basic difficulties still persist.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>11</sup> El Siglo, February 12, 1968.

One of these is the absence of a significant public dialogue on the contribution of education toward effecting a more prosperous nation for all Colombians. Part of this difficulty has resulted from the notion that "development" is a concept so untouchable, dealing with economic and sociological studies so complicated, that many people, even those with a previous real interest in education, hesitate to commit themselves to involvement. A formidable group of planners has emerged in Latin America with a spirit and unity all their own. This unity tends to overawe others with different approaches to remedies for educational problems. As a consequence, those groups in Colombian society which ought to have educational goals in common, frequently have so much difficulty in communicating with one another that a real dialogue is slow to develop.

Still another difficulty is the natural tendency on provincial levels to look to the national government as the traditional source of initiative, and officials often share this view of their role. As a result, there is a general lack of collaboration between the Office of Educational Planning and various other concerned groups, despite the sincere concern of all for educational reform.<sup>12</sup> This situation is made still more difficult by the general lack of effective "grass roots" organizations able to serve as a nucleus for indigenous educational reform. Many of these less-favored social classes, which ought to be actively proposing their own reforms, are inclined to look to the government to provide solutions to their difficulties, in much the same manner that they look to God or the church for solutions to

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<sup>12</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., pp. 259-61.

spiritual problems. Except for the efforts of the church's Acción Cultural Popular (ACPO), there is little evidence of a concerted effort anywhere in educational circles to develop and accelerate in the lower classes a belief that there lies dormant in them an inherent capacity for changing their circumstances.

Some conditions detrimental to national development can be found in the school itself. Textbooks and classroom lectures usually treat problems theoretically -- that is, on a relatively high level of abstraction without application to a concrete situation. Teachers are often more fascinated by the process of formal logic than by the specific solution to an immediate problem. In fact, much traditional teaching is quite hostile to socio-economic development -- particularly the established and required philosophy and religion courses. Distinctions between body and soul, holiness and worldliness, and God's will and human responsibility are treated as dichotomies. Schooling attempts to inculcate final truths, rather than tolerance for a variety of ideas different from one's own. Philosophy does not create a questioning attitude; instead, it provides final and definitive answers. Some sample statements from textbooks illustrate these points:

Natural kindness (without a religious motivation) has no positive value in the eyes of God.

A man is more esteemed for his spiritual qualities than for his worldly ability.<sup>13</sup>

On the subject of democracy, Rousseau's assertion that the people are sovereign because all authority originates with them is refuted

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 303-4.

in another text as follows:

Authority comes from God; it cannot reside with the people, since they have no natural or acquired authority. The authority of the people is fragile, since when everyone decides (thinks), no one is responsible.<sup>14</sup>

Some Colombians believe that since the church is both powerful and conservative, it may become a positive force for bringing about radical social changes through evolutionary rather than revolutionary means. At the same time, a potential political risk arises if elementary education is to be expanded successfully through the fifth grade, for this will increase the pressure to enlarge the very limited secondary school facilities now being provided at public expense. Moreover, unless the present effort at such expansion is successful, elementary graduates are likely to remain half-educated and frustrated. This may well result in their turning to revolutionary tracts rather than agricultural bulletins for their reading material. Then, too, despite the democratic implications of increasing elementary school facilities a strong case may be made for giving even greater priority to the training of technicians and middle-level management people.

Poor people in many parts of Colombia are not slow to recognize the importance of education as a means of achieving social status. In addition, Castro's claim to a high literacy level in Cuba has exerted some pressure to emphasize literacy programs and elementary education. Illiterate adults are usually embarrassed by their own inability to read and proud of their children's proficiency. The difficulty lies in the fact that literacy tends to become a means of achieving social status,

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<sup>14</sup> Loc. cit.

rather than a means of continuing self-education. Many teachers stress the status value of schooling over the usefulness of what is taught. This is because, in their own experience, they have found status more useful than the content of the school's offerings. For some Colombians, the extremely high dropout rate is one of the country's most hopeful indicators, for it seems to show there is a large majority which would support practical schooling if it were instituted. In any case, schooling is increasingly being seen as the best avenue of social mobility within reach of certain sectors of the Colombian population.<sup>16</sup>

#### Education Development Trends and Activities

Colombian education is expanding at a rapid rate, but it is still not growing fast enough to meet the country's needs. As the following table indicates, expansion is most rapid in higher education. In 1965 83.5 percent were enrolled in elementary education, 14.9 percent in secondary education, and 1.6 percent in higher education.

Enrollment by Levels of Schooling  
1955-1965

	Enrollment (in thousands)				Index of Growth 1955 = 100			
	1955	1958	1963	1965	1955	1958	1963	1965
Elementary	1,236	1,493	2,096	2,270	100.0	120.1	169.6	183.7
Secondary	135	215	360	405	100.0	159.3	266.7	300.0
Higher	13	19	34	43	100.0	146.2	261.5	330.8

<sup>16</sup>Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 40.

Despite the growth depicted above, education in Colombia remains for many an expensive luxury, dominated by an elite tradition with little relevance to their condition. The lower classes have become increasingly aroused to obtain schooling as a means of social mobility. Rural violence has led many peasants to save their money for the purpose of educating their children rather than for buying land, as before.<sup>17</sup> Others migrate to urban areas where schooling is available or send their children to live with relatives in communities with better schools. Although population increases are resulting in a mounting number of illiterates, the proportion of them in relation to the general population is reduced each year. The economically active population also has been increasing numerically; but the percentage of the total population contributing by its economic activity to the support of education has declined from 34.4 percent in 1938 to 33.4 percent in 1951, and then to 29.4 percent in 1964. At the same time there is also a shift to urban occupations, training for which requires a greater amount of instruction.<sup>18</sup>

The system of monoculture which characterizes much of Colombian agriculture has also effectively limited the educational aspirations of the rural population. Since simple agrarian tasks do not offer extra remuneration for superior educational qualifications, levels of training tend to remain low. This has the effect of creating a vicious circle in which low technological levels in agriculture and low educational levels make development difficult. This kind of situation

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<sup>17</sup> Fals Borda, op. cit., p. 200.

<sup>18</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, op. cit., pp. 10-14.

suggests the need for establishing educational goals which favor fundamental change over merely more improvements in the existing situation.<sup>19</sup> One such basic change has been encouraged by the Colombian Institute of Agrarian Reform (INCORA). This rural development agency has found that it is often more economical for a peasant to live in a small central village of 16 or more families than to live on his individual farm. INCORA feels that this is the only feasible way to extend community services such as education and water and, eventually electricity and sewerage. Rural living also becomes more pleasurable if the peasant is less isolated and has helpful examples to follow.<sup>20</sup>

There is a natural tendency for middle class individuals to aspire to the value system of the influential elite. They tend to use education to achieve symbolically this upper-class concept of themselves, in spite of the inappropriateness of these values to national developmental needs. Such tendencies prevent the fullest development of a sense of personal authenticity and national self-respect which should emerge from the present indigenous life pattern of lower status Colombians. This kind of self-respect is necessary to the development of a set of viable middle- and lower-middle-class values so essential, in turn, for the growth of a democratic society. It seems clear that an elite-oriented, educated middle class is unlikely to be capable of understanding and identifying with the unrealized aspirations of peasants. Consequently it continues to remain unable, if not unwilling, to support fundamental educational reforms necessary

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>20</sup> Holt, op. cit., p. 92.

for the creation of a more viable society.<sup>21</sup> At the same time, there are many examples of movement in positive directions. In the last decade, secondary graduates have more and more been inclined to major in less traditional fields. A major government effort is now under way to develop large, comprehensive high schools, which will contribute to more effective social integration and will also be more responsive to a wider range of vocational and social class interests. The expansion of student credit, especially in higher education, gives more Colombians a growing confidence that they will achieve their ultimate educational goals.

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<sup>21</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 305.

## CHAPTER 6

### PRESCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

According to decree 1637 of 1960, elementary education (nearly always designated as educación primaria) includes preschool education, elementary education, and adult literacy programs. Preschool education begins at about five years of age and is usually conducted under private auspices. Elementary schooling begins officially at age seven.

Before 1963 there were three types of elementary education: (1) the alternated two year rural school, (2) the four year rural school established in 1950, and (3) the five year urban elementary school. The principal defect of this system was that it discriminated against rural children. As established by decree 1710 of 1963, elementary education now consists of a "compulsory" five year course with the same curriculum for both urban and rural schools. Vocational emphasis and school-related activities, however, may vary considerably. Many incomplete elementary schools continue to function in rural areas.

The stated purposes of elementary education differ little from those of most countries. According to decree 1710 of 1963, it seeks to: (1) contribute to the harmonious development of the child and the optimum structuring of his personality, with a Christian attitude toward life in a free and democratic tradition, (2) provide the child with a sound basic education, (3) inculcate habits of cleanliness, hygiene, and intelligent use of inner resources, (4) prepare the child

for a life of responsibility and employment in accordance with his individual aptitudes and interests, and (5) encourage a sense of civic spirit, national identity, and solidarity with all peoples of the world.

Although public elementary education is often of high quality and teachers in national schools are generally well paid, there is frequently a stigma attached to sending one's child to public school. In fact, in many departments free public education is regarded as pauper education, and parents of even very modest means often prefer private schools. A director of a public elementary school frequently sends his own children of elementary school age to a private institution.

There are 198 days in an elementary school year (including Saturday mornings). Although class schedules vary somewhat with the organization of the school, the teacher is expected to spend about six hours daily with her pupils. In schools with double sessions, the time is reduced to five hours daily, while in schools of intensive functioning (funcionamiento intensivo), a session of four hours daily is used. Many schools have been on double sessions in many areas since 1951.

The official ages for school attendance are from seven to eleven years, but this varies considerably. In 1961, for example, 428,267 elementary pupils (23.9 percent) were twelve years of age or older. The average starting age for the whole country was nine years and four months, and in rural areas, beginning children were often much older.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 113.

Preschool and Kindergarten

The lowest level of education is usually kindergarten (jardín infantil) and is attended by children from four-and-one-half to six-and-one-half years of age. The national government's six schools of this kind were established to serve working mothers. They function on the principle that social maturation is more important than academic preparation<sup>2</sup> and are located in poor neighborhoods in the largest capital cities. In 1965, 91.3 percent of preschool children were in private schools, and many of these heavily emphasize an academic program, partly because first grade does not begin until age seven. Kindergarten enrollment in 1964 was as follows:<sup>3</sup>

<u>Type of Institution</u>	<u>Number of Institutions</u>	<u>Enrollments</u>
Total Public	46	3,670
Boys	3	1,349
Girls	9	2,321
Coeducational ( <u>mixto</u> )	34	---
Total Private	1,001	41,520
Boys	154	19,611
Girls	204	21,909
Coeducational ( <u>mixto</u> )	643	---

The Ministry of National Education's kindergartens seek primarily to influence parents to take a more active interest in their children's development. A secondary function is to serve as demonstration centers for private schools. Although preschool education is desirable, limitations of government resources do not at present permit expansion

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<sup>2</sup>Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Orientaciones sobre Educación Pre-escolar, Bogota: División de Educación Elemental, 1966, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup>Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística, (DANE), La Educación en Colombia, 1963-1964, Bogota: November, 1966, pp. 1-2.

of the program. Of the total kindergarten enrollment, almost a third of the children were in Bogota; other large enrollments were in Medellin, Barranquilla, and Cali. Most of the private institutions cater to an urban, upper-class student population.

The Ministry's section for preschool education has been active in offering training and guidance to persons concerned with preschool instruction. From 1962 through 1967 it offered 38 short courses to help prepare some 3,564 assistant teachers. In addition, it offered 110 lectures to nearly 7,000 parents, and distributed a large number of texts and other materials for the guidance of parents and teachers. These courses are particularly useful in helping private kindergarten teachers who are not child-oriented but who are eager to learn new methods pertaining to the education of young children. An institute of the Universidad Pedagógica Femenina in Bogota led to the establishment in 1958 of a program for the preparation of these teachers. There is also a school for preschool teachers in Medellin.

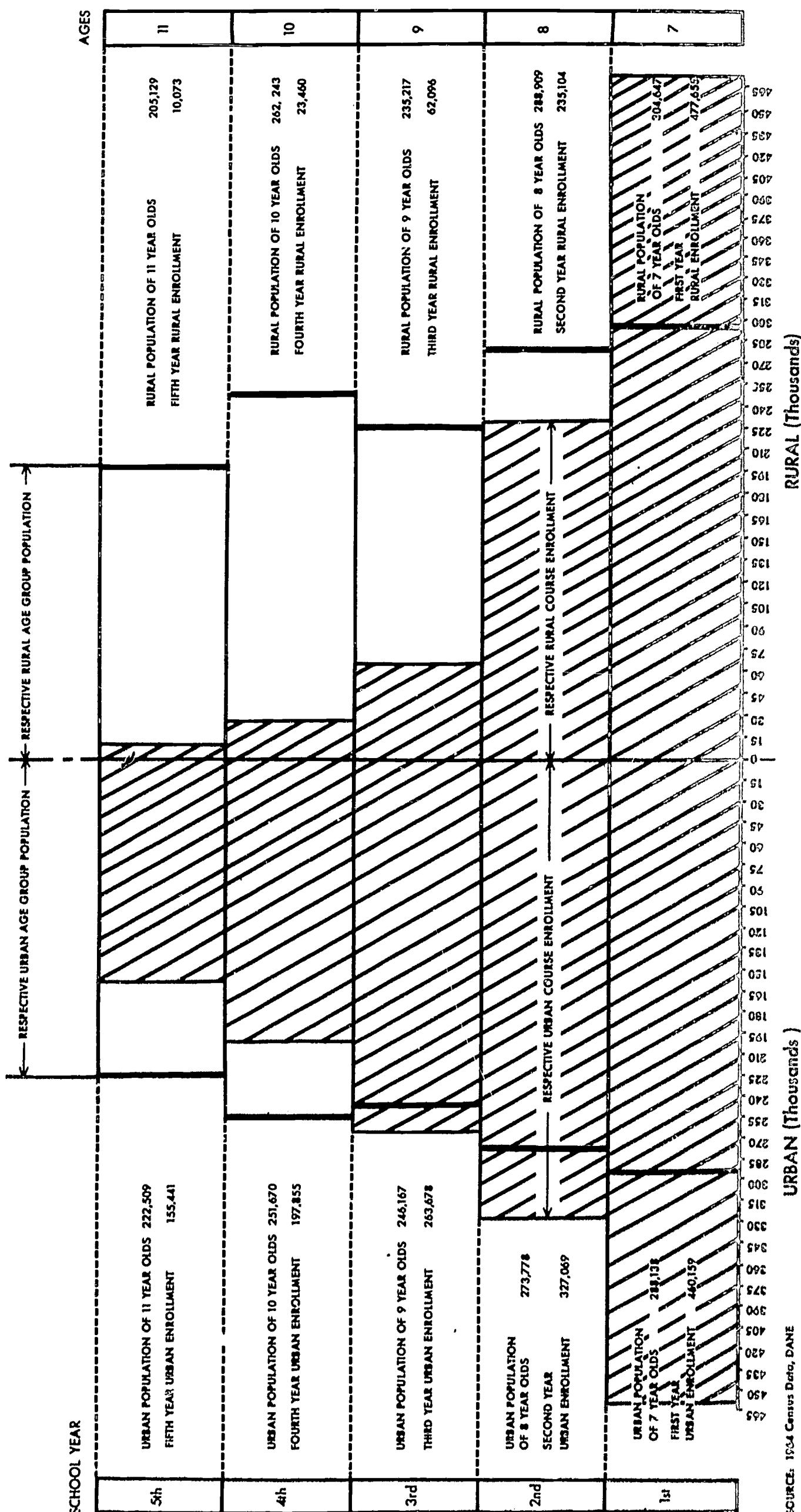
#### Elementary Education

Several distinctive features of the elementary school population are illustrated in Figure 2. Urban enrollments in the first three grades exceed the number of students in the respective urban age groups. This is because many pupils have enrolled a year or two late or have failed and are repeating the year. There is also a tendency for rural parents to send their children to school in urban areas, if possible, even on the elementary level, because they realize that the quality of urban teaching is better. The excess enrollments in first grade in rural areas represent students who begin first grade at

Figure 2

## ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

URBAN - RURAL ENROLLMENT 1964



ages 8, 9, 10, or 11, plus those who repeat the first grade. The dropout rate in both urban and rural areas is high. Dropout generally occurs earlier in rural areas. In fact, in many rural communities, no classes are offered beyond the second or third grade, although the Ministry of Education is using a variety of methods to extend its slender resources in correcting this situation.

Table 3 indicates the extent to which elementary students tend to drop out of school. The data also show, for example, that in rural areas nearly 10 percent of the pupils who are in first grade are at least 12 years of age.

Statistical Trends. The extent to which elementary school programs vary in length is indicated below:<sup>5</sup>

Number of Schools in 1965

Type of School	Public Elementary Schools with:					Private Elementary Schools with:					
	Year(s)					Year(s)					
	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
Urban	214	454	491	811	2,912		105	131	174	239	1,688
Rural	795	9,681	3,578	1,398	779		7	30	24	25	82

Between 1955 and 1965 the average annual rate of growth in enrollment was 6.4 percent. During the same period the number of teachers doubled. Although education is accessible to a much larger portion of the population than ever before, about 25 percent of all children never attend school. Fortunately, however, an increasing number of parents are recognizing the need for their children to complete five years of elementary schooling, especially if they are to compete for urban employment opportunities.

<sup>5</sup>Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto De Educación Media, Estadísticas Educativas y Económicas, Vol. VII, pp. 70-71.

TABLE 3  
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN COLOMBIA<sup>6</sup>

Total Enrollment - 1965

Age	Grades					Total
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	
7	321.718	23.258	1.333	--	--	346.309
8	238.950	113.916	17.246	1.307	---	371.419
9	142.067	143.704	64.225	12.991	1.649	364.636
10	98.670	111.940	87.809	42.069	9.259	349.747
11	53.271	74.395	68.949	56.817	28.803	282.235
12	37.087	56.956	54.131	56.087	44.911	249.172
13	16.893	29.796	31.032	38.042	41.665	157.428
14	8.770	14.046	16.590	24.163	32.639	96.208
15 +	4.432	6.028	7.598	11.730	23.096	52.884
Total	921.858	574.039	348.913	243.206	182.022	2,270.038

Total Urban Enrollment

7	176.246	18.584	1.151	--	--	195.981
8	128.246	82.351	15.426	1.231	--	227.254
9	67.451	92.524	55.385	12.230	1.435	229.025
10	41.317	62.830	71.494	38.644	8.879	223.164
11	20.958	37.713	54.646	51.069	27.334	191.720
12	12.910	25.333	40.801	49.266	42.272	170.582
13	5.153	11.854	22.695	33.023	38.820	111.545
14	2.390	5.133	11.718	20.764	30.121	70.126
15 +	1.422	2.323	5.183	9.850	21.004	39.782
Total	456.093	338.645	278.499	216.077	169.865	1,459.179

Total Rural Enrollment

7	145.472	4.674	182	--	--	150.328
8	110.704	31.565	1.820	76	--	144.165
9	74.616	51.180	8.840	761	214	135.611
10	57.353	49.110	16.315	3.425	380	126.583
11	32.313	36.682	14.303	5.748	1.469	90.515
12	24.177	31.623	13.330	6.821	2.639	78.590
13	11.740	17.942	8.337	5.019	2.845	45.883
14	6.380	8.913	4.872	3.399	2.518	26.082
15 +	3.010	3.705	2.415	1.880	2.092	13.102
Total	465.765	235.394	70.414	27.129	12.157	810.859

<sup>6</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto De Educación Media, Estadísticas Educativas y Económicas, Vol. VII, p. 53. These enrollments increased in 1966 to 2,059,033 in public and 349,456 in private schools. Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística, "La Matrícula en la Enseñanza Primaria," Boletín Mensual de Estadística, Nr. 205, April, 1968, p. 152.

Class size, or student-teacher ratio, varies with the kind of institution. In 1964 official elementary schools averaged 39 students per teacher -- 41 per teacher in urban areas and 37 in rural areas. Private elementary schools, which are primarily urban, averaged 23 pupils per teacher. In 1965 about 87 percent of elementary pupils were enrolled in public schools and the remainder in private institutions. Average class size shrank to 36 pupils per teacher in public institutions and increased to 27 per teacher in private schools.<sup>7</sup> In some urban departments, teachers sometimes have classes of 80 children or more.

Recent Trends in Enrollment. The public portion of elementary enrollments has remained at about 86 percent since 1962. This compares with 93.8 percent in 1950. Heavy migration to the cities is reflected by the 64.3 percent of all enrollments found in urban areas in 1965, as compared with 50.5 percent in 1950. Private and church education facilities have generally expanded rapidly in recent years.

#### Curriculum and Instruction

The 1963 curriculum differs from its predecessors in these main areas: first, it concentrates on the study of natural sciences in the last three grades, second it increases the teaching of mathematics and, finally, it emphasizes the mastery of language (Spanish).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 14. The statistical data on which these percentages are based are not equivalent to those given in Table 3.

<sup>8</sup> Arango, op. cit., p. 41.

TABLE 4

CURRICULUM FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (Decree 1710 of  
(In hours per Week)

Areas	First Grade Subjects	Hrs.	Second Grade Subjects	Hrs.	Third Grade Subjects	Hrs.
Moral & Religious Education	Religion 2 Religious History 1		Religion 2 Religious History 1		Religion 2 Religious History 1	
Spanish	Reading & Writing 5 Vocabulary 2 Oral & Written Phraseology 2		Reading and Writing 5 Vocabulary 2 Oral & Written Phraseology 2		Reading 2 Writing 1 Vocabulary 1 Composition 1 Grammar 1 Spelling 1	
Mathematics	Arithmetic 5 Geometry 1		Arithmetic 5 Geometry 1		Arithmetic 4 Geometry 1	
Social Studies	History & Geog. 3 Deportment & Civics 2		History & Geography 3 Deportment & Civics 2		History 2 Geography 2 Civics 1 Deportment 1	
Natural Sciences	Introduction to Sciences 3		Introduction to Sciences 3		Sciences 2 Hygiene 1 Gardening 2	
Aesthetic and Manual Education	Music & Singing 1 Drawing 1 Manual Skills 2		Music & Singing 1 Drawing 1 Manual Skills 2		Music & Singing 1 Drawing 1 Manual Skills 2	
Physical Education	Dancing Educational Gymnas. Organized Games 3		Dancing Educ. Gymnastics Organized Games 3		Dancing Educ. Gymnastics Organized Games 3	
TOTALS		33		33		33

\*Girls spend half of the allotted time studying child care and home economics.

9 Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Programas de Enseñanza Primaria, Bogota: Editor

TABLE 4

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (Decree 1710 of 1963)<sup>9</sup>  
(In hours per Week)

Second Grade		Third Grade		Fourth Grade		Fifth Grade	
Subjects	Hrs.	Subjects	Hrs.	Subjects	Hrs.	Subjects	Hrs.
Religion	2	Religion	2	Religion	2	Religion	2
Religious History	1	Religious History	1	Religious History	1	Religious History	1
Reading and Writing	5	Reading	2	Reading	1	Reading	1
Writing	2	Writing	1	Writing	1	Writing	1
Vocabulary	2	Vocabulary	1	Vocabulary	2	Composition	1
Composition	2	Composition	1	Composition	1	Grammar	2
Grammar	1	Grammar	1	Grammar	1	Spelling	1
Spelling	1	Spelling	1	Spelling	1		
Arithmetic	5	Arithmetic	4	Arithmetic	4	Arithmetic	4
Geometry	1	Geometry	1	Geometry	1	Geometry	1
History & Geography	3	History	2	History	2	History	2
Government & Civics	2	Geography	2	Geography	2	Geography	2
Civics	1	Civics	1	Civics	1	Civics	1
Deportment	1	Deportment	1	Deportment	1	Deportment	1
Sciences	3	Sciences	2	Sciences	2	Sciences	2
Hygiene	1	Hygiene	1	Hygiene	1	Hygiene	1
Gardening	2	Gardening	2	Gardening	2	Gardening	2
						Science Experiments	1
Music & Singing	1	Music & Singing	1	Music & Singing	1	Music & Singing	1
Drawing	1	Drawing	1	Drawing	1	Drawing	1
Manual Skills	2	Manual Skills	2	Manual Skills	2	Manual Skills*	2
Dancing		Dancing		Dancing		Dancing	
Educ. Gymnastics		Educ. Gymnastics		Educ. Gymnastics		Educ. Gymnastics	
Organized Games	3	Organized Games	3	Organized Games	3	Organized Games	3
33		33		33		33	

including child care and home economics.

9. Manual de Enseñanza Primaria, Bogota: Editorial Bedout, 1964, p. 1.

Lesson Guides. The Ministry of Education publishes carefully prepared guides, which describe in elaborate detail how a teacher may present a lesson effectively. Following is a sample of the content of the guide for first grade. It was prepared for the third week of October, 1967 (which is near the end of the school year), and amply illustrates the nature of the material made available by the Ministry of Education:<sup>10</sup>

Problem #28 third week, Topic: How Can We Save?

Pennies grow into pesos.

Time is money.

Haste makes waste.

He who saves ahead, stays ahead.

Program Theme

The Church of Jesus, the family of God on earth (Question 36)

In the House of God, they gather together and pray in the name of Jesus (Question 37)

Social Studies

Basic needs of the whole family

Importance of work and intelligent use of time

Advantages of saving and forms of saving

Persons with whom the child comes into contact: Banker, Messenger

World Savings Day

Savings Institutions - Colombian Savings Bank  
School Savings

Visit the Colombian Savings Bank

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<sup>10</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Guía para el Maestro, Educación Primaria, Primer Grado, Bogota: División de Educación Elemental, January-November, 1967, pp. 246-47.

Language (Lenguaje)

Distinguish question sentences by means of question marks

Tell about one's experiences

Composition: the Busy Bee

Song about saving, singing

Dramatizations

Planning a visit

Interpretation of some comic strips

Oral summary of a simple selection read aloud

Reading of flash cards (afiches)

Read and write names of friends and members of the family

Interpret and complete simple symbols (jeroglíficos).

Mathematics

Problems of subtraction and addition (inverse operation)

The number 19. Break down into pairs of sums

Subtract with 7, 8, and 9 without borrowing

Subtract numbers with two figures without borrowing.

Esthetic and Manual Education

Singing: Hymn of Saving, first verse

Drawing: Make a picture of a pile of money

Physical Education

Game: The Little Candle (See folder for Instructions)

Objectives

Fix habits of saving aimed at an intelligent use of time and resources available for the rational satisfaction of pupil needs.

Develop a spirit of taking care of their clothing and personal objects, school furniture, trees, and public places in the community.

Develop skill in using leftover materials, which when intelligently modified, provide comfort, enjoyment or beauty.

Accustom them to treat with respect all people who render them a service.

Help them progress in their ability to read and write correctly and interpret graphs.

Be capable of applying number concepts in the solution of practical addition and subtraction problems.

Participate with naturalness and initiative in dramatic games and dramatizations.

Help fix habits in the adoption of correct behavior with respect to remaining seated, stopping, reading, writing, and walking.

### Activities

In clear language, the manual sets forth several pages of activities. One of these has the teacher write several relevant sentences on the board, as follows:

My daddy works to support the family.

My mother buys only what she really needs. Thus, my mother saves money.

The child who studies saves money for his parents.

Germán saves because he takes care of his texts and notebooks.

Saving is spending only what you need to,

At the savings bank they raffle off a house to those who have an account there.

Study is a special task of children.

My father has a savings account.

With the money they saved, mother and father bought a house.

I bought mother a gift with the money I saved.

I bought this box of crackers with my savings.

A sample of the public school's first grade end-of-the-year test in religion follows:

1. Fill in the blank to complete the sentence.
  - (a) Everything which exists was made by \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (b) Our first parents committed the sin of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (c) When we say \_\_\_\_\_ to God we commit a sin.
  - (d) We celebrate the birth of Jesus on \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (e) The mother of Jesus is called \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Mark the best answer with an x.  
Why is Sunday the Lord's Day?
  - (a) \_\_\_\_\_ because it's the last day of the week.
  - (b) \_\_\_\_\_ because it's a holiday.
  - (c) \_\_\_\_\_ to celebrate the triumph of the Resurrection.
3. How do we honor the Christians on the Lord's Day?
  - (a) \_\_\_\_\_ offering the holy sacrifice of the Mass.
  - (b) \_\_\_\_\_ dancing happily.
  - (c) \_\_\_\_\_ going for a walk.
4. Whom should we love?
  - (a) \_\_\_\_\_ our parents.
  - (b) \_\_\_\_\_ our friends (compañeros).
  - (c) \_\_\_\_\_ all our fellow creatures (semejantes).
5. Which of these prayers is the better?
  - (a) \_\_\_\_\_ Ave Maria.
  - (b) \_\_\_\_\_ Lord's Prayer.
  - (c) \_\_\_\_\_ Creed.
6. Why did Jesus suffer?
  - (a) \_\_\_\_\_ for making himself known to man.
  - (b) \_\_\_\_\_ because he loved us.
  - (c) \_\_\_\_\_ to forgive our sins.

Draw a line connecting those which go together.

(a) We first received the life of Jesus Christ in the . . .	Communion
(b) The gathering together of the children of God is the . . .	Confession
(c) We received Jesus Christ in the . . .	Temple
(d) Sins are forgiven if we repent in the . . .	Church
(e) The church meets in the . . .	Baptism

Although such didactic materials are widely used by teachers in schools administered by the Ministry of National Education, they are not available to all teachers.

Textbooks and Methods. Efforts have been made to set up funds to provide for free textbooks, especially on the elementary level. Notebooks, pencils, chalk, crayons, textbooks, and especially a reader and a Roman Catholic catechism are provided when available, but often they are in short supply. Textbooks are frequently passed down from older pupils. Ministry approval of textbooks attempts to keep them from being changed more often than once every three years in order to spare parents undue expense. Many texts are well-organized, often with appropriate visual materials, and are usually adapted to specific grade levels. Some emphasize practical matters such as agriculture, health, and nutrition. Surprisingly, not even all teachers own textbooks, and those who do sometimes use them only to a limited extent.

In the Aritama study,<sup>11</sup> teachers selected from the official curriculum only those subjects which supported local values. Thus, citizenship (cívica), manners (urbanidad), care of dress and shoes, and needlework were taught, while tasks connected with agriculture, housekeeping, and hygiene tended to be ignored. Teachers were quite critical of government subject matter and considered certain materials to be useless or offensive, particularly those on reforestation and the growing of vegetable gardens.

Daily subject matter in Aritma depended upon the whim of the individual teacher, who chose his material from mathematics, geography,

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<sup>11</sup>Reichel Dolmatoff, op. cit., pp. 119-121

history, religion, citizenship, manners, Spanish, national history, and a number of ill-defined subjects. Hardly any of the teachers in this community used government textbooks. They preferred to employ their own hand-me-down copybooks, which contain more or less complete outlines of subject matter, arranged as questions and answers. Two typical examples -- Question: How does the bee sleep? Answer: Standing. Question: How did Bolivar die? Answer: Naked as he was born. The routine at the beginning of the school day finds the children sitting or walking in the school yard memorizing. During the second hour they recite and copy their assignments, and the same pattern follows throughout the day. There is little need for the child to think; the principal tool is a good memory. Whenever a question is put to him in a different form, the child is totally incapable of answering. If he tries to rephrase his answer, he is likely to receive a reprimand.

For teachers in Aritma there are two kinds of knowledge -- practical knowledge acquired from everyday experience, and abstract knowledge taught at school. Knowledge acquired at school may contradict actual experience, but school learning is better because it is "civilized" knowledge. Physical punishment in Aritama was frequently used, but ridicule and comparison with the Indians was by far the most common and the most effective method of punishing children.

While patterns of instruction such as the above are not uncommon in rural areas where poorly prepared teachers predominate, even in many of the better schools learning is viewed as a passive experience. Although the concept that learning is receiving does not usually imply that knowledge should lead to action, the bare possibility of a connection between knowledge and action is seldom mentioned.<sup>12</sup> At the same time there are

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<sup>12</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 303.

many teachers who function quite effectively in an authoritarian tradition. They are firm, poised, and in personal command of the classroom. Their lucid use of metaphor and definition at the precise moment when class recitation calls for clarity is often remarkable, and their presentation of lesson material is extremely well-organized. Colombian educational leaders are keenly aware of the faults in the foregoing widely-used teaching methods, and their efforts at reform are of long standing. Pestalozzian techniques have been known for over a century. The German delegations brought Herbartian ideas, which were usually modified by Colombian values and interpreted to favor systematic imposition of information and limited freedom of activity. On the other hand, the more permissive views of the Belgian Decroly have been popular in many of the more respected urban schools where his "centers of interest" replaced fixed curricula and gave students more freedom. The activity school of Ferrier and others was also highly regarded. Changes in Ministers of Education often resulted in official shifts in methodology, although recent policy is both more permissive and more eclectic. Although most teachers are highly dedicated, many lack imagination and tend, consequently, to favor dictated lessons and formal recitation techniques.

Examinations. To be promoted, an elementary school child must master the subject matter for his grade. In 1964, 20.2 percent of urban boys and 19.6 percent of urban girls who took the final examinations in the elementary grades were not promoted to the next higher grade. Failure rates were slightly higher in rural public schools, and considerably lower in private schools. The high percentage of children who repeat a grade is an additional burden for already crowded schools.

Present testing methods in the elementary schools are not considered satisfactory. As a result, in 1964 and 1965 objective examinations were employed experimentally in the third, fourth, and fifth grades in Bogota. The results showed that students considered "poor" by previous testing methods often achieved high scores in objective tests in mathematics, language, natural sciences, and social studies. The scores attained were even higher the second year that objective tests were administered. The proportion of students passing the new examinations varied from 50 to 95 percent, while under the essay system, the proportion was much lower. Teachers tend to regard the examination as a selective device rather than a measure of what students ought to know.<sup>13</sup>

#### Buildings and Services

More than a decade ago, 31 percent of the nation's elementary school structures had not been originally built to serve as schools. Many had been private homes or chicha liquor stores; 38 percent lacked basic hygiene facilities.<sup>14</sup> Many schools in rural areas still are conducted on rented premises and lack toilets and running water. Despite the government's efforts to improve facilities, a survey by Havens<sup>15</sup> of ten rural communities revealed that no new schools had

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<sup>13</sup> Betty Rodríguez et al, "Evaluación de Conocimientos a Nivel de la Escuela Primaria," Revista de Psicología (Bogota), 11:113, Nr. 1 and 2, 1966.

<sup>14</sup> Fals Borda, op. cit., p. 210.

<sup>15</sup> A. Eugene Havens, Education in Rural Colombia: An Investment in Human Resources, Madison, Wisconsin: Land Tenure Center, University of Wisconsin, 1965, p. 10.

been built, and that few of those in operation were buildings designed exclusively to be schools. Of 24 schools, only five urban buildings were modern and well-cared-for and had small libraries. Besides this, the only other teaching aids present in 17 of the 24 were maps of Colombia. Frequently, only one textbook per subject was available in the classroom.

In a survey by Comstock and Maccoby, a description of some better-than-average "small town" schools states that:

. . . most classrooms are bare of instructional materials. There are almost always some religious pictures and objects on the walls; occasionally, there is an assortment of a dozen or so ragged texts. Quite often, there is a picture of the late President Kennedy. There are, of course, striking exceptions -- a classroom filled with maps and pictures, ordered by displays or objects made or assembled by the children, decorated with flowers, a brilliant creation molded by an exceptionally diligent and dedicated teacher.<sup>16</sup>

In 13 schools, the average class size was about 53 pupils per teacher, with the first grade somewhat larger than the others. Several classrooms lacked enough desks, even with three pupils sitting together at each.

Schools sometimes provide supplementary services. In the early 1960's, 1665 public elementary schools financed by the national government had school lunch facilities which provided breakfasts and lunches to indigent children. In addition, in 1964 public elementary schools in cities which are headquarters for regional educational centers

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<sup>16</sup> George Comstock and Nathan Maccoby, The Peace Corps Educational Television (ETV) Project in Colombia -- Two Years of Research, Research Report Nr. 5, The Day-to-Day Job of the Utilization Volunteer -- Structure, Problems and Solutions, Stanford: Institute for Communication Research, 1966, pp. 41-42.

provided 34,928 medical examinations, 11,012 treatments, 6,963 clinical examinations, 43,293 dental examinations and treatments, and about 26,000 health consultations with parents.<sup>17</sup>

### Rural Education

Rural elementary education is the least satisfactory. The rural alternated schools are a typical example. Authorized in 1958 as a temporary measure these two-year schools offer 188 days of class. Because boys and girls attend every other day, the pupil received only about 94 days of instruction. Since each sex is usually divided into first- and second-year courses, pupils frequently receive instruction only about 47 days per year.<sup>18</sup> In 1962, 53 percent of all rural children were still attending these alternated schools.

The village of Contadero, Narino, (population 4,685) offers a specific illustration.<sup>19</sup> Of the 12 elementary schools in the community, only three offer more than three years of study. Not many pupils attend past the second or third year, and few can read or write well. Although some educational facilities are available throughout the community, almost one-fourth of the eligible children are not enrolled in any school. Heavy dropout rates often reduce enrollments by one-half during a school year. Sickness, lack of interest on the part of the

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<sup>17</sup> Gomez, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

<sup>18</sup> Legters, op. cit., p. 156.

<sup>19</sup> D. W. Adams and A. E. Havens, "The Use of Socio-Economic Research in Developing a Strategy of Change for Rural Communities: A Colombian Example," Economic Development and Cultural Change, 14: 205, 207, and 213, January, 1966.

family, and labor requirements on the small farms during harvesting and planting seasons are the principal reasons for school nonattendance. Only four of the twelve teachers in Contadero have more than ten years of formal schooling.

Despite the fact that Contadero is in one of the few regions not affected by violence since 1948, it has enjoyed relatively little educational progress. The church is closely associated with the educational system, influencing the formation of the curriculum, providing teacher training, and giving adult education through its radio schools. The low overall level of schooling in the community imposes limitations on the methods which can be used to introduce change for it prepares them only for local occupations. The schools also fail to provide the younger members of the community with new ways of perceiving their situation, and as a consequence, they tend to perpetuate the status quo.

Similar conditions exist in Cereté, Cordoba,<sup>20</sup> (population 29,666) where roughly 25 percent of the pupils examined failed their first grade promotion tests. On any given school day in Cereté, about one-third of the students are absent. In addition, many rural teachers fail to attend classes regularly.

Nonattendance and dropout in Cereté, as in Contadero, are not due solely to failure and lack of interest. In many cases the school calendar interferes with family obligations and labor needs. Although the school calendar is modified to accommodate the cotton harvest, a peak labor period, rice planting also demands the labor of all family

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<sup>20</sup>Havens, op. cit., pp. 7-10.

members. Also, certain tasks have been culturally defined as children's work, particularly gathering lizard's eggs and turtles. Although the rainy season reduces the demand for child labor, poor roads make it difficult for both teacher and pupils to reach school. In spite of the poor quality of the education in Cereté, it is highly valued. However, for the peasant families physical survival is of more immediate concern.

In rural communities such as these, the teacher holds a position of prestige; but in the teaching community generally, rural teachers occupy the lowest rung on the ladder. In addition to the efforts of the Ministry of National Education and the various departments to support education in rural areas, INCORA spent 4,090,577 pesos in 1965 for elementary education and for courses to improve the use of natural resources. Coffee- and tobacco-growing organizations have sponsored similar educational work.

Nuclear Schools. The rural nuclear school consists of a central school with complete facilities, which also serves as an administrative and coordinating center for all teaching and extra-school activities in surrounding schools of lesser quality. Rural boarding schools (internados) serve a similar function. Colombia has 21 nuclear schools, 7 rural boarding schools, and a total of 160 satellite schools. In 1968 these schools enrolled 14,000 children and 15,000 adults in rural areas. Each nuclear school is served by an agricultural expert, a health improver, a shop teacher, and a literacy instructor. The usual physical pattern is a cluster of two-year satellite schools around a nuclear school consisting of grades three to five. Graduates of the nuclear school may then attend secondary schools. A number of these nuclear schools provide home economics and agricultural education as well as an

academic program, and each rural school has its own farmland from which it may derive some additional income.

#### The Emergency Plan of 1967

Leaders of the Colombian Federation of Educators (FECODE) claim responsibility for initiating the First National Education Conference, held in Bogota at the end of 1966. Among the many reforms called for at this conference was an emergency plan to bring about immediate improvement in educational conditions, particularly for the masses.<sup>21</sup> The Ministry of Education calculated early in 1967 that there was a shortage of 700,000 elementary education places (cupos) in the nation. Decree 150 of January 31, 1967, set out to correct this deficiency as rapidly as possible.

The new Emergency Plan points out that Article 41 of the National Constitution establishes the obligation of the state to provide free elementary education to all children of school age. It goes on to add that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations also recognizes the right of all persons to education without regard to race, sex, or economic or social condition. It says further that one of the points on the program of the National Front is to place education on all levels within reach of the people, and it is therefore the duty of the government to bring about permanent improvement in the quality of education, and to increase the educational system's contribution to the national welfare. This Emergency Plan, which went into effect early in

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<sup>21</sup> Renovación Educativa, August 6, 1967.

1967, consists of three main features: (1) an Intensive Functioning school (Escuela de Funcionamiento Intensivo), (2) a double-session school, and (3) a one-teacher, five-year elementary school. A copy of the curriculum for the Intensive Functioning school follows:

TABLE 5

INTENSIVE FUNCTIONING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM  
EMERGENCY PLAN, DECREE 150 OF 1967<sup>22</sup>  
(In Hours per Week)

Courses	I	II	III	IV	V
Moral and Religious Education	2	3	3	3	3
Language		6	6	7	6
Mathematics		6	6	6	6
Social Studies	18*	3	4	5	6
Natural Sciences		2	3	4	4
Esthetic and Manual Education		4	4	4	4
Physical Education	2	2	2	2	2
Total	22	26	28	31	31

\*Balanced (global) instruction, which combines pupil interest with informal subject matter instruction.

Summary of Curriculum Content

Moral and Religious Education: Religion and religious history

Language: Reading and writing, vocabulary, oral and written composition, and grammar

Mathematics: Arithmetic and intuitive geometry

Social Studies: History, geography, deportment, civics, introduction to economic cooperatives, with special attention to personal qualities of good citizenship, and the spirit of social solidarity.

Natural Sciences: Introduction to the natural sciences and their applications to the rural and urban environment. Health education. Also, for fifth grade girls: principles of child care, emphasis on scientific concepts.

Esthetic and Manual Education: Music, singing, drawing, home economics, and manual skills, with emphasis on the balanced cultural development of the pupil.

Physical Education: Dancing, gymnastics, and educational games, with emphasis upon sportsmanlike behavior.

Intensive Functioning Schools. The Emergency Plan decree reduced pupil hours per week in Intensive Functioning schools from 33 to 22, 26, 28, 31, and 31 for each grade from one to five. This had the effect of freeing a first grade teacher for 11 hours per week, a second grade teacher for 7, a third grade teacher for 5, and a fourth or a fifth grade teacher for 2 each. Their time was then reassigned, so that by teaching extra classes but not extra hours per day, they would be able to reach more pupils.

To de-emphasize the rote teaching of the typical elementary school teacher, the program of Intensive Functioning assigns the first grade teacher one topic a week of a very general nature, such as "the family." The teacher then relates arithmetic, language arts, social studies, and other appropriate school subjects to this general topic. The unstructured nature of much of the first grade curriculum has the effect of forcing the elementary teacher to consider the relevance of her teaching to her pupils' circumstances, instead of merely presenting quantities of verbalistic information. Manuals have also been prepared to offer more precise guidance. Plan "R" sketched below shows how three teachers in three classrooms may teach four grades. Each letter represents a teacher

Figure 3

**ELEMENTARY EDUCATION**

**PLAN "R" ( 3 TEACHERS , 3 CLASSROOMS, 4 CLASSES )**

HOUR	FIRST GRADE				
	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
8:00	A	A	A	A	D
9:00	A	A	A	A	D
10:00	A	A	A	A	A
1:00		A		A	
2:00		A		A	
3:00					

HOUR	SECOND GRADE				
	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
8:00	C	C	C	C	C
9:00	C	C	C	C	C
10:00	C	C	C	C	C
1:00	C	C	C	C	C
2:00	C	C	C	C	C
3:00	C	C	C	C	C

ADDITIONAL FIRST GRADE					
8:00	9:00	10:00	1:00	2:00	3:00
B	B	B	B	B	B
B	B	B	A	A	A
B	B	B	A	A	A
A	C	C	A	A	A
A	C	C	A	A	A
A	A	A	A	A	A

**THIRD GRADE**

C					
8:00	9:00	10:00	1:00	2:00	3:00
B	B	B	B	B	B
B	B	B	B	B	B
B	B	B	B	B	B
A	C	C	A	A	C
A	C	C	A	A	C
A	A	A	A	A	A

at work and a classroom in use. The large blocks indicate the teaching schedule, and the teacher assigned to each class. The letter "D" represents classes taught by teachers released from other grades who have an obligation to complete their weekly 33 hours of teaching. The extra period owed by teacher "C" may be used in cooperative planning with other teachers or in substituting for teacher "B" at 3:00 P.M. Tuesdays. An advantage of the more complex scheduling is that it requires the elementary teacher to be clearly aware of what work each of her classes should be doing during a particular hour of the day. This has the effect of forcing her to become more systematic in the organization and preparation of her classes.

An arrangement similar to the above makes provision for three teachers to teach four classes in two classrooms on double session, with some time left over for administrative duties (Plan C). Still another, known as the Recuperation Plan, shortens the 33-hour school week for the first three grades and schedules many of the afternoon hours for extra help by the teacher for students experiencing difficulty in class. By 1968, the Ministry reported that some 200,000 new elementary school places had been created in various departments at virtually no additional cost. In fact, in some districts, a radio campaign became necessary in order to find pupils to fill the schools. In one department alone, some 27,000 pupil places were created during 1967 using these methods.

Another feature of the 1967 Emergency Plan was the introduction of the one-teacher, five-year elementary or "unitary" school. In rural areas where population density is low, schools offering more than one or

two years study have few pupils in the upper grades. Decree 150 called for a conversion of all of these schools to the standard five-year curriculum and the initiation by local secretariats of education of special courses to train teachers for the new program. Only certified teachers are eligible to teach in unitary schools, and schools must have fewer than 20 students to be so classified.

Still another aspect of the Emergency Plan is the double-session school. Classes meet in two sessions, from early morning to late afternoon, from Monday through Saturday. The same decree also authorizes coeducational classes in elementary schools with fewer than 30 pupils.

#### Dropouts

Perhaps the most crucial problem in elementary education is the tendency of pupils to drop out of school long before they have completed the course. Such a practice not only provides an incomplete educational experience but it is also an inefficient and often wasteful use of resources. In elementary education in urban Colombia, the percentage of students still in school during the fifth year amounts to 43.8; in rural Colombia, the comparable figure is 3.0 percent. Only 22.7 percent of those enrolled in first grade in 1961 remained in school to begin their fifth year of elementary education in 1965. Regional variations are considerable. For example, in urban Bogota, 52.7 percent reached the fifth grade and similar figures occurred in urban sections of the departments of Atlántico, Valle, and Boyacá. The rural area around Bogota, however, retained only 13.9 percent, rural Valle 4.4 percent,

Boyacá 2.8 percent, and Nariño, in the southern part of the country, 1.0 percent.<sup>23</sup>

The analysis of school dropout (deserción) tendencies is not as simple as might be expected. In urban areas, for example, more students enroll for the third year of elementary school than passed the second year. This is because many rural schools offer only two or three years of instruction. Children who wish to continue their education must move to urban areas. Furthermore, students often leave school before taking their final examinations. Some return later, making it difficult to determine just how many students dropped out permanently.

Many children take two or more years to complete a grade; about one-fifth of all children repeat their first year. This has the effect of denying school enrollment to some children because of lack of space. This denial of opportunity is greater in rural areas, where the repetition rate is almost twice that of urban areas and where the quality of education is poorest. Bernal found that between 1957 and 1962 there had been a slight increase in the tendency to complete the five years, despite rising enrollments. The dropout percentage also declined between 1953 and 1961 in spite of the fact that enrollments increased by 75,000 during the same period.<sup>24</sup> This apparent improvement, however, may represent little more than the general tendency of the rural population to move to the cities where better education is more frequently available.

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<sup>23</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, *Proyecto de Educación Media*, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 54.

<sup>24</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., pp. 116, 118, 120, and 122.

Reasons for Dropout. Several studies have been conducted to ascertain the reasons for the high rate of school dropout. The available data have definite faults because they were collected by school personnel who have a tendency to overlook certain kinds of explanations. The results of the survey are instructive, nevertheless:

Major Reasons for Primary School Dropout (1964)<sup>25</sup>

<u>Urban Reasons for Dropout</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u>
Change of Residence	71,000
Little Parental Interest	39,000
Illness	30,000
Distance to School	13,000
Work at Home	12,000
Farmwork	7,000

<u>Rural Reasons for Dropout</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u>
Change of Residence	48,000
Little Parental Interest	40,000
Illness	22,000
Farmwork	16,000
Distance to School	15,000
Work at Home	12,000

In addition to the reasons listed above, the internal order of the school and family are important, though unlikely to be reported by teachers who collect data. Some of the scholastic reasons which encourage withdrawal are: (1) an undifferentiated curriculum, which in most

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<sup>25</sup>DANE, La Educación, op. cit., p. 10.

communities does not adapt itself to the needs of children, (2) emphasis is upon rigid scholastic requirements which minimize individual differences, (3) poor teaching methods and poorly prepared teachers, (4) lack of personal and vocational counseling, and (5) lack of alternatives to the school's formal program. These and other reasons often discourage continuing attendance. Underlying all this is the widely-held viewpoint of administrators and teachers that the process of selection of the most able is more important than helping each child develop his ability to the maximum.<sup>26</sup> Another reason for poor attendance is the frequent unavailability of school lunches in rural schools. In addition, children are often rented as laborers to fincas for two or three pesos a day. This represents a source of income to their families which would be lost if they were in school.

The rate of absenteeism in 1965 for the entire country was calculated at 36.3 percent. In rural areas children often are absent to harvest such crops as coffee and cotton. In order to reduce the rate of elementary school dropout, particularly that resulting from failure at the end of the year, a restructuring of the elementary program has been proposed which would permit a more flexible promotion policy in the first three grades. It is hoped this would lead to an increase in the enrollment in the upper grades of elementary school.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Varner, op. cit., pp. 47-48.

<sup>27</sup>Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 13.

### Criticisms

Many recommendations for the improvement of elementary education have been offered. A study mission in the early 1960's drew attention to the now reduced but still continuing discrimination in favor of urban education to the disadvantage of rural children. The curriculum, too, is criticized for its excessive subject matter content, which does not allow time for individual or group work, and which ignores the special needs of young children. Subject matter is often encyclopedic, filled with abstract concepts unrelated to the child's experience, and designed with eventual university study in mind. Teaching is often lacking in unity and ignores the fact that, for the vast majority of children, their first few years of schooling are all the formal intellectual accoutrements they will ever have an opportunity to acquire. The study mission went on to lament passive methods of teaching, in which the teacher talks and the child listens, or pretends to -- a method the teacher uses because she knows no other. The study complained of the lack of textbooks and the almost complete absence of instructional materials. It deplored rote teaching based on recitation without comprehension and lack of group work which teaches cooperative attitudes.<sup>28</sup> Roman Catholic spokesmen have complained of the elementary curriculum as being too restricted, too inflexible, and inclined to discourage innovation.

Many educational leaders believe that greater local control of education would increase local tax support for schools, particularly

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<sup>28</sup> Pedro Gómez Valderrama, Memoria del Ministro de Educación Nacional, Vol. I, Bogota: Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 1964, p. 18.

if a national incentive system were used. Coeducation is being encouraged as a means of reducing costs in smaller schools. Although the church is opposed to coeducation in public schools, it has accepted the practice in small communities where the cost of separate classes would be prohibitive.

A number of lesser changes might be introduced with little or less difficulty. Since the lack of detailed, accurate information about the child population in Colombia makes it extremely difficult for the government to plan educational programs, one recommendation calls for the incorporation of educational information into the personal identity certificate which all Colombians are required to have. This would simplify the enforcement of compulsory education laws in communities where facilities are adequate but children do not attend school. The requirement would also provide a legal record of each child's educational attainments. In addition, information is widely needed in many departments concerning the exact location of schools, the number of teachers in service and the number and sex of students enrolled.

Poorly prepared teachers are a serious problem in Colombia. Unfortunately, in-service training, which is widely available, is not an efficient way of improving their skills. The Council of Secretaries of Education recently decided to employ as new teachers only those who had completed at least the first cycle (four of six years) of secondary education. However, the low level of preparation of most elementary teachers will continue for many years. Because their inadequate basic education provides them with little imagination, some experts have advocated the preparation of detailed practical textbooks which spell out word-for-word the practical facts and applications that children

need to cope with their immediate environment. Since memorization is so typical in Colombian elementary schools, practical, self-explanatory textbooks which stimulate children to think reflectively might be prepared for memorization under the personal guidance of the teacher. Another suggestion is the replacement of small and ineffective rural schools by partly self-sustaining boarding institutions.

It is clear that to solve all of these problems would amount to a socio-economic revolution. Most of the problems which affect Colombian elementary schools arise not from the school itself but from the society which it serves. The primitive living conditions and isolation of some rural areas where schooling is least effective make it especially difficult to obtain able teachers for those areas and to provide financial support for even a minimum quality of rural education. In the strictest sense, then, the problems do not result from unique short-comings in Colombian education but are rather manifestations of economic, social, geographical and political circumstances which have influenced the course of Colombia's development for generations.

## CHAPTER 7

### PUBLIC SECONDARY EDUCATION

Secondary schools are those institutions which require five years of elementary instruction as a prerequisite to admission. Two distinct terms are used for secondary education. The most common designation is middle education (educación media), a term which refers to post-elementary education, especially that part which is not the traditional academic program. The other term is secondary education (educación secundaria), which refers to the traditional academic bachillerato. The term colegio is a constant source of confusion. Although the most common meaning is private school, usually on the secondary level, this meaning is not universally employed. Many colegios also offer some elementary education preparatory to their more advanced work. Some also provide boarding facilities. Elementary schools without tuition charges or with extremely low tuition are usually labeled escuelas rather than colegios, even though they attempt to offer comparable work. In general, colegio, liceo, and instituto are prestigious terms applied to academic secondary schools.

The traditional purpose of secondary education is to prepare students for the university. Officially its objectives include: (1) continuing, amplifying, and intensifying basic educational fundamentals provided by elementary schools, (2) meeting the needs of the adolescent in his intellectual, moral, religious, social, and esthetic education, (3) guiding

him in his development and contributing to the development of his personality, (4) forming good habits of conduct such as responsibility, initiative, honesty, truthfulness, sincerity, satisfaction in one's work, ability to deal with difficulties, dependability, punctuality, good manners, tolerance, and a sense of acceptance and respect for the law and for unusual ideas, (5) teaching him to study, (6) stimulating in him the idea of individual and collective discovery and the wise use of free time, (7) enabling him to work effectively with others, thereby achieving a sense of individual, family, civic, and social responsibility, (8) helping him to develop his potentialities so that he may enjoy a full life, (9) inculcating a spirit of patriotism and a willingness to serve his nation, (10) preparing him to live in a society which is constantly evolving in response to cultural, social, scientific, and technological change, and (11) preparing him to continue his education by undertaking studies in higher education.<sup>1</sup>

#### Structure and Organization

Decree 1637 of 1960 created the following administrative sections in the Ministry of National Education for the Division of Secondary Education: secondary, industrial, commercial, agricultural, and women's vocational education. The three main divisions are: general secondary, or bachillerato, vocational or technical secondary education, and normal education. Since 1962, secondary education has been divided into two cycles, the basic cycle (ciclo básico) of four years which is common

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<sup>1</sup>Decree 45, January 11, 1962, pp. 2-3.

to all branches, and the second, or vocational cycle (ciclo profesional) of two years, which offers specialization in a variety of areas.

One of the functions of the basic cycle is to discourage premature specialization in secondary schools. The new common (basic) cycle permits a student to decide upon his future career after he has reached greater maturity. In addition, it increases the flexibility with which a secondary student may transfer from one secondary school to another. So far these reforms have been initiated only in general secondary and normal education and the changes are incomplete in other specialized secondary schools. In industrial and agricultural education, the second cycle has been increased to three years.<sup>2</sup>

Official schools must operate a minimum of 37 weeks per year, including the time set aside for examinations. At least 1,140 hours must be devoted to classes, laboratories, and "co-curricular" activities. No courses may be offered for less than one semester (cuatrimestre). Private secondary schools may adopt different schedules, provided that the number of weeks and hours taught annually are not less than above.<sup>3</sup>

National Schools. The administrative position of rector or director (head principal) is sought after for the prestige it gives. In national schools, a teacher is eligible for rector if he or she is on the first or second category of the personnel register (escalafón), if he has had ten years teaching experience, and is of the same sex as the students. Rectors are selected by the Ministry of National

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<sup>2</sup>Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 33.

<sup>3</sup>Decree 45, op. cit., p. 6.

Education, and they may be transferred at any time to another school. One difficulty of the present policy is that it does not grant enough recognition to the individual who is especially well-qualified as a school administrator. This is because Colombian secondary schools are generally very small, making the administrative role a relatively unimportant one. The new National Institutes of Middle Education (Institutos Nacionales de Educación Media) make the training of skilled school administrators more imperative.

In 1964 there were 61 Ministry of National Education secondary schools offering the bachillerato curriculum, 10 of which provided partial programs, and 10 of which were devoted to women's education. There were also night and double-session programs, as well as 7 commercial, 33 industrial, 40 agricultural, 47 home economics and home skills, and 39 normal schools.<sup>4</sup> These, combined with departmental and municipal institutions, made a total of 925 public secondary schools in 1964, actually only about a third of the 2,523 secondary institutions in the country. Of the total number, 1,295 were general secondary, 880 were classified as vocational, and 348 were listed as normal institutions. Of the general secondary schools, 422 were public and 873 were private. Of the public schools, 87 were administered by the national government, 321 by departmental governments, and 14 by municipal governments.<sup>5</sup> Of the vocational institutions, commercial schools were the most numerous, and 383 of the 445 total in this area of specialization were private.

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<sup>4</sup>Varner, op. cit., p. 14.

<sup>5</sup>DANE, La Educación, op. cit., p. 11.

Somewhat less than half the normal schools were private institutions.<sup>6</sup>

Fragmentation of Secondary Programs. A distinctive feature of Colombian secondary education is its fragmentation. There are, for example, schools belonging to the central government as well as others to the department; there are non-profit private schools, non-profit private cooperative schools, schools run for private profit, church-sponsored schools, and a large number of schools conducted in various foreign languages. Also within the categories just listed, secondary schools may have differing purposes and functions because they seek to attract a different kind of clientele. There are university preparatory schools, business schools, normal schools, schools of agriculture, schools of art, etc. In addition, nearly all of these schools are further subdivided by sex. Academic secondary schools, commercial schools, and normal schools, respectively, are the most numerous.

More than 80 percent of all Colombian colegios and liceos are located in departmental capitals. Unless a rural student has sufficient funds to travel to these cities and to pay for room and board, tuition, uniforms, and supplies, it is virtually impossible for him (except in a few rare scholarship cases) to enjoy secondary education and to prepare for the university. Some of Colombia's well known public secondary schools are as follows:

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<sup>6</sup>Instituto Interamericano de Estadística, America en Cifras, 1965: Situación Cultural: Educación y otros Aspectos Culturales, Washington, D. C., Pan American Union, 1967, p. 81.

Well Known Public Schools

<u>Name</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Estimated Enrollment</u>
Externado Nacional Camilo Torres	Bogota	2,000
Liceo Nacional Antonia Santos	Bogota	500
Liceo Antioqueño	Medellin	1,500
Colegio Santa Librada	Call	300
Colegio Mayor de Bolívar	Cargagena	300
Liceo Celedón	Santa Marta	300
Liceo de Varones	Popayán	300
Liceo de los Andes	Pereira	300
Colegio Deogracias Cardona	Pereira	300

Buildings and Facilities. Many of the older secondary school buildings have been constructed with a cement patio surrounded by a building of several stories. The patio is usually the only recreational area and it has just enough space for one or two basketball courts. Because secondary schools are most numerous in congested urban areas, there is seldom room to enlarge these facilities. With the exception of some new and quite impressive modern schools, the majority of Colombia's secondary school buildings are dilapidated and poorly equipped.

Of the more than 2,200 secondary schools in 1962, few had laboratories or complete vocational education facilities. Of 238 post-elementary public schools of all types, including secondary and normal schools, only 99 possessed even the beginnings of a library.<sup>7</sup> Textbooks themselves

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<sup>7</sup> Gómez, Memoria del Ministro de Educación Nacional, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 75.

were scarce in the poorer areas. Faculty sponsors, student councils, and other student activities are still not found in a majority of the schools.

#### Enrollment and Trends

Although the private sector predominates in secondary education, the public sector has grown considerably during the past five years. The percentage of women is also increasing -- from 43.8 percent in 1950 to 47.9 percent in 1965. Major trends are indicated in the following table:

TRENDS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECONDARY ENROLLMENTS<sup>8</sup>  
1950-1965

Year	Total	Public	%	Private	%
1950	86.595	37.503	43.3	49.092	56.7
1955	134.655	55.947	41.6	78.708	58.4
1960	253.768	100.261	39.5	153.507	60.5
1962	312.391	122.883	39.3	189.508	60.7
1965	404.802	186.335	46.0	218.467	54.0

Nearly two-thirds of all secondary students are enrolled in the bachillerato program. Enrollments in this and other fields are given below:

<sup>8</sup>Data include all branches of secondary education, including those which do not have two complete cycles. Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 42.

ENROLLMENT IN SECONDARY EDUCATION BY  
SPECIALIZATION AND SEX FOR 1965<sup>9</sup>

Specialization	Total	Men	%	Women	%
Bachillerato	266,240	169,364	63.61	96,876	36.39
Normal	57,156	11,380	19.91	45,776	80.09
Commercial	49,292	9,891	20.07	39,401	70.93
Agricultural	3,760	3,600	95.74	100	4.26
Complementary	9,801	661	6.74	9,140	93.26
Industrial	18,553	16,150	87.04	2,403	12.96
Total	404,802	211,046	52.13	193,756	47.87

From 1955 to 1965, secondary :enrollments increased nearly  $3 \frac{1}{2}$  times while the number of teachers approximately doubled. However, this apparent increase in student-teacher ratio is not necessarily indicative of declining quality, for student-teacher ratio previously was about 15 to 1. Moreover, since many secondary teachers are part-time, their absolute number is not a clear indication of quality of instruction. The data in the table above do not include the substantial numbers enrolled in the Ministry of Labor's National Apprenticeship Service (SENA) program in vocational education.

School Size. Secondary schools are generally very small. One study early in this decade showed that the average official school offering the bachillerato had an enrollment of 212 students, with a student-teacher ratio of 15 to 1. Private schools offering the same

<sup>9</sup>Loc. cit.

program enrolled an average of 142 students, with a student-teacher ratio of 11 to 1. Schools offering a commercial program had an average enrollment of 100 and a student-teacher ratio of 11 to 1. The average size of all secondary schools was 130.<sup>10</sup> Of course, these enrollments usually decline during the school year as students drop out. A reform under way in 1968 has begun to create large comprehensive high schools with larger classes. At present, because of high rates of withdrawal, introductory classes are very large and advanced classes are extremely small.

Statistical Curiosities. Raw data concerning secondary education may be misleading. For example, in 1961 a comparison of school enrollments between ages 12 and 18 with the total population in that age group indicated that 10.5 percent were enrolled in secondary education during that year. Actually, 18.4 percent of the age group were attending school, but most of the remainder were still in elementary school, and a few were attending universities.<sup>11</sup>

A curious, but typical, phenomenon of articulation between elementary and secondary education is illustrated by the fact that 88,531 pupils took their final examinations at the end of the fifth year of elementary school in 1960. Only 75,916 of these passed, but the following year, 102,728 students were enrolled in the first year of secondary education. Several factors explain this apparent increase: (1) A large number of students repeat the first year of secondary education, (2) students in some schools enter certain courses which are labeled secondary, but

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<sup>10</sup>Varner, op. cit.

<sup>11</sup>Bernal Escobar, op. cit., pp. 124-26.

which do not require prior completion of elementary school, (such as "complementary education" or home schools for farm women), and (3) some students may be unable to get into a regular secondary school in a certain year due to lack of space or other consideration, resulting in a small backlog of students. In general, it appears that those who manage to complete the five-year program of elementary education clearly intend to continue on to secondary education.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, secondary graduates usually intend to continue their education. This can be illustrated by the fact that in 1964, first-year university enrollment was 84 percent of the preceding year's secondary graduates.

### Curriculum

A basic curriculum must be adhered to in all five major branches of secondary education, both public and private. The common curriculum employs 30 of the 38 hours. Academic schools use the remaining 8 hours for additional course work called "intensifications," although this time is generally intended for extra-curricular activities. Normal and vocational schools use these extra hours for a specialized training program. Both cycles of the six-year curriculum are given below in Table 6.

Co-curricular Activities. Supplemental activities (actividades coprogramáticas) are activities in which student initiative is encouraged to promote a well-rounded personal development. These activities include: directed study, library, clubs, literary groups, field trips, vocational guidance, theatre, and collective labor. Industrial arts and home

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 126-27.

TABLE 6  
BASIC CYCLE OF SECONDARY (MIDDLE) EDUCATION<sup>13</sup>  
(Expressed in Class Hours per Academic Year)

Subject	Grade Level:	6	7	8	9
	Year:	I	II	III	IV
Religious and Moral Education		90	90	90	60
Spanish and Literature		150	150	150	150
Mathematics		150	120	150	210
Natural Sciences		60	60	60	120
Social Studies		150	210	210	120
Foreign Languages		90	90	90	90
Industrial Arts and Domestic Studies		60	60	60	60
Esthetic Education		60	60	60	60
Physical Education		60	60	60	60
Supplemental Activities and/or more intensified academic or technical studies		270	240	210	210
Totals		1140	1140	1140	1140

ADVANCED CYCLE FOR BACCALAUREATE (BACHILLERATO) DIPLOMA  
(Expressed in Class Hours per Academic Year)

Subject	Grade Level:	10	11
	Year:	V	VI
Religious and Moral Education		60	30
Psychology		60	--

<sup>13</sup>Decree 45 of 1962.

TABLE 6 (continued)

Subject	Grade Level:	10	11
	Year	V	VI
Philosophy		90	120
Social Studies		--	60
Spanish and Literature		90	90
Foreign Languages		150	150
Mathematics		90	60
Physics		120	120
Chemistry		120	120
Physical Education		60	60
Supplemental activities and/or more intensified academic or technical studies		300	330
<b>Total</b>		<b>1140</b>	<b>1140</b>

**MIDDLE AND SECONDARY EDUCATION  
CURRICULUM SUMMARY**

**Mathematics:**

1st and 2nd Years	Arithmetic and Beginning Geometry
3rd and 4th Years	a) Algebra,      b) Geometry
5th Year	Trigonometry and Elements of Analytic Geometry
6th Year	Introduction to Mathematical Analysis

**Spanish and Literature:**

1st through 4th Years	Grammar, Spelling, Composition, and Reading
5th and 6th Years	Grammar, Spelling Composition, and Literature

## TABLE 6 (continued)

Foreign Languages:

1st through 4th Years	English
5th and 6th Years	a) English, b) French

Natural Sciences:

1st Year	Introduction to the Sciences
2nd Year	Plant Biology
3rd Year	Animal Biology
4th Year	Anatomy and Human Physiology and Health
5th Year	a) Physics, b) Beginning Mineralogy and Inorganic Chemistry
6th Year	a) Physics b) Organic Chemistry

Social Studies:

1st Year	a) Physical and Human Geography Applied to Colombia b) General and American Pre-History applied to Colombia c) Civics and Deportment
2nd Year	a) Geography of the Old Continent, Oceania and Polar Regions b) Ancient and Medieval History
3rd Year	a) Geography of America b) Modern, Contemporary and History of the Americas
4th Year	a) Geography of Colombia b) History of Colombia
6th Year	Colombian Institutions and World Affairs

Psychology and Philosophy:

5th Year	Psychology and Philosophy
6th Year	Philosophy

Religious and Moral Education:

1st through 6th Year	Religious and Moral Education
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TABLE 6 (continued)

Physical Education:

1st through 6th Year	Educational Gymnastics and Sports
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Esthetic Education:

1st through 6th Year	Choir, Music Appreciation, Drawing
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1st and 2nd Year	Penmanship
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economics (educación para el hogar) in the basic cycle include elective activities which, while they impart knowledge, also develop vocational skills such as typing, photography, bookbinding, airplane modeling, mechanics, carpentry, farming, cooking, and first aid, among others. Schools are expected to choose from those areas most related to their philosophy and facilities. Students are to choose one or two electives from those offered.<sup>14</sup>

The advanced cycle is designed to provide general education and increase opportunities for securing remunerative and socially useful employment. This cycle is also required for university admission. Besides a core of required subject matter, optional materials may be closely related to the formal subject matter, to the student's aptitudes, or to vocational or career interests. In 1968, physical education was increased from 60 to 90 hours annually -- the added 30 hours to be taken from time designated for other supplementary activities.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>15</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Programa de Educación Física para Enseñanza Media, Bogota: 1967, preface.

The Secondary Baccalaureate (Bachillerato)

The academic bachillerato diploma is the basic program of Colombian secondary education. This is the branch of education known as secundaria, rather than the more inclusive term middle (media) education. It stresses academic learning and preparation for entry into the university. In 1965, 65.8 percent of all secondary students were taking the academic bachillerato, and 41.8 percent of these were in public schools.

A central aim of the bachillerato is to provide the student with a broad cultural background. For many years, its possession implied that the bearer had studied at one of the exclusive, privately-owned colegios. The emergence of government secondary schools in the 1950's diminished the prestige of the bachillerato, although it is still regarded as the hallmark of the truly educated youth. The long-standing contempt of the upper and middle classes for manual labor continues to make vocational secondary education unattractive.

To parents, the bachiller is a special person who has the right to be respected. He has become one of those cultured and honorable people worthy of particular consideration. The social pages of newspapers also reinforce this image of a privileged person, conscious of his competence and his rights, and a future member of select circles. Critics of this attitude suggest that the bachiller is a dilettante -- excessively literary and conservative in his opinions. The curriculum does seem most appropriate for meeting the needs of upper-class youth -- a course which stresses memorization of encyclopedic knowledge and traditional cultural content.<sup>16</sup> Because of its prestige the bachillerato

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<sup>16</sup>Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 287.

forms the basis of most programs in commercial, industrial, agricultural, and normal education.

Commercial Education. Although the official program now lasts six years, many schools do not follow it but grant their own diplomas and certificates instead. Many commercial students get a job after only one, two, or three years of study. Commercial studies seem to attract a different kind of student from those attracted to the bachillerato. The vocational opportunities available after only a few years of commercial studies are much greater than those available to academic bachillerato students.<sup>17</sup>

Industrial Education. On the secondary level, industrial education includes such specialties as mechanics, foundry, electricity, motors, cabinet work, etc. Decree 718 of 1966 reorganized industrial education into a basic cycle of four years, followed by a technical cycle of three years. An institution which devotes itself exclusively to the advanced cycle may call itself an industrial technical institute. However, to enter the university, the student must have a bachillerato, which means he must take the fifth and sixth year of the academic bachillerato plus an additional year of specialization.

Normal Education. This branch of secondary education employs its advanced cycle for the preparation of elementary teachers. Decree 1955 of 1963 placed both urban and rural normal education on a six-year basis throughout the country. The two years of the professional cycle have been divided into four five-month terms, with promotion in each term. Dropout rates in the normal schools have been lower than in other secondary

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 133.

programs, probably because the diploma provides a definite cash value to its owner. The new project to develop large, comprehensive secondary schools does not at present include plans for making the preparation of elementary teachers one of the functions of this institution. This is principally because Colombia already has a great many normal schools.

#### Instruction and Method

The full-time secondary teacher spends an average of four hours per day with students, which amounts to about 24 class hours per week (besides study hall, library, and other activities).<sup>18</sup> A great many secondary teachers, however, serve part-time, and therefore complete more than a full schedule by teaching in several schools. Known as "taxi professors," they teach one or two classes at one school and then taxi to the next one, teach another class or two, and move on until their school day ends, often at night. The more classes they teach, the more they can earn. An obvious defect is that this practice allows virtually no time to prepare for classes.

Most secondary teachers use the lecture method, and students diligently take notes. Teachers see themselves as responsible for selecting, usually by means of examination, those who are most competent. Many secondary teachers have not completed university study. Although some may have had special training to become secondary teachers, those in charge of natural sciences are often there because they did not complete medicine or pharmacy; many in literature, history or philosophy

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<sup>18</sup> Ministry of Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 88.

have had a few years of law; the Latin teacher may have left seminary before being ordained; the mathematician probably never completed his engineering studies.<sup>19</sup>

Fortunately, most secondary teachers possess an unusual facility for rendering apt, well-phrased definitions in a clear, convincing manner. The classroom pose most commonly affected is one of firm confidence and authority. Critics of Colombian education frequently lament what they regard as excessive emphasis given to memory work. On the other hand, others contend that mastery of certain quantities of factual information is necessary before fruitful discussion of a topic may take place.

Critics also claim that Colombian teachers tend to abuse the principle of authority in the sense that they make frequent reference to famous authors and sources to support this or that argument without having students discuss in their own terms the issues under consideration. Student wall newspapers, like much of the Colombian press, have been described as tending to set forth problems as opportunities for a display of formal logic in the spirit of an intellectual game, rather than as a sincere quest to reach a better understanding of the issue.<sup>20</sup>

Records. All schools are required to have individual record books (libretas escolares), in which are recorded for the information of parents the student's grades, attendance, behavior and effort. A student who transfers from one secondary school to another at the end

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<sup>19</sup> Augustín Nieto Caballero, Una Escuela, Bogota: Antares-Tercer Mundo, 1966, p. 74.

<sup>20</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 267.

of the first grading term must have his previous term grades accepted without question by his school.<sup>21</sup>

Examinations. For a final examination to be taken in any subject, it is necessary to have at least five grades -- one for each month or nine for two semesters. These monthly grades may be based upon recitations, projects, notebooks, or the like, or tests given during regular class periods. The average of the grades obtained in this manner will have a weight of 60 percent, and the final examination counts 40 percent. If a student's grade average is less than two he is ineligible to take the final examination in that subject. His earlier grade then becomes his final grade. A student is required to have attended at least 90 percent of the required classes in order to be eligible for the final examination.<sup>22</sup> Two professors usually read the final examination.

A typical examination consists of anywhere from one to twenty essay questions, all of which call for a memorized reply, based mostly on the teacher's lectures or on readings assigned the students. Many secondary school directors are dissatisfied with the quality of many essay questions, and favor greater use of objective items. Grades are based heavily on a student's ability to write an effective essay. Class participation, attitude, etc., although acceptable parts of grading procedures, are usually minimized by teachers so that they may avoid criticism of their method of evaluation. Such precautions are especially important because of the relatively high rates of failure.

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<sup>21</sup> Decree 45 of 1962.

<sup>22</sup> Loc. cit.

In 1964, 16.8 percent of men secondary students and 11.7 percent of women students failed their year.<sup>23</sup> A study of regular students at the National University indicated that 30.6 percent of that fairly select group had repeated one or two subjects in secondary school, while another 25.3 percent had repeated from three to five subjects during their secondary career. Only 36.3 percent had not failed a single secondary course. Actually, 18.5 percent had repeated one year of secondary work.<sup>24</sup> Teachers on all levels are inclined to regard the examination as an obstacle which the pupil must overcome. They often see the student who fails as having been duly guided by the hard facts of academic life to drop out of school because he cannot cope with its reasonable but exacting demands.

Grading System. Decree 1598 of 1934 established the following grading system for all official schools:

- 5 very good (muy bien)
- 4 good (bien)
- 3 satisfactory (regular)
- 2 poor (mal)
- 1 very poor (muy mal)
- 0 terrible (pésimo)

The system in use at the National Pedagogical University in Bogota illustrates a variant of this system:<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> DANE, La Educación, op. cit., p. 14.

<sup>24</sup> Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Censo de Estudiantes, Primer Semestre, 1967, Bogota: Oficina de Planeación de la Rectoría, 1967, Vol. I, p. 29.

<sup>25</sup> Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, Prospecto, 1967, Bogota, p. 50.

- 5 outstanding (sobresaliente)
- 4 good (bueno)
- 3 approved (aprobado)
- 2 deferred (aplazado)
- 1 failed (reprobado) (not subject to makeup)
- 0 failed (reprobado) (not subject to makeup)

Credit by Examination. A system of free study went into effect in 1965, in which a student over 16 years of age may enroll in the first cycle of secondary education. He then becomes eligible to consult with teachers and take examinations without attending classes, thus receiving approval (credit) for his course.<sup>26</sup>

Work Load. Students are required to attend up to 38 hours of class per week. This amounts to nine or more subjects each year. A reduction of hours spent in class and an increase in hours of homework and self-study would not only reduce the need for so many teachers but would stimulate a spirit of greater individual responsibility.

School Values and National Development. The academic secondary school is often criticized for the alleged irrelevance of its program to the needs of national economic and social development. Some information on this topic is available from a 1965 study of 321 sixth-year academic (bachillerato) students in 12 Colombian secondary schools located in four different departments. Six of the institutions studied were private Catholic colegios, three were public, and three Protestant.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Gómez, Memoria del Ministro de Educación Nacional, Vol. I, op. cit., p. vi.

<sup>27</sup> Andrés Benoit and others, "Educa la Educación Colombiana?" La Hora, Nr. 53, pp. 4 and 7, September, 1967.

The intellectual currents among these students suggests the kind of ideas which the secondary school milieu conveys. It was found that generally they expressed their ideas in the vocabulary of traditional scholastic philosophy, the vocabulary of the Bible, the vocabulary of some French authors (especially Malraux, Camus, and Sartre in one public school), the language of opposition political parties, and the direct and spontaneous vocabulary of a young rebel, but not in the vocabulary of contemporary Christian theology.<sup>28</sup>

The greatest degree of secularization in the study was encountered in official schools, and the least in Catholic schools in small cities. Secularization is generally identified with the values commonly found in economically developed, complex societies. Students in public schools were more likely than students in Protestant or Catholic institutions to accept the statement that man should seek to change society. Catholic students were more likely than the others to accept socio-economic inequalities as reflecting the will of God. In Catholic colegios in smaller communities, this view was accepted by at least 60 percent of those interviewed. Catholic students had the greatest inclination to accept the statement that the poor have the kind of luck they deserve. Over half of all the secondary students, Catholic and non-Catholic, agreed that social discontent arises from a failure to accept God's will. This view was still more common among students in the smaller cities. Over 90 percent of all students, however, accepted the notion that secondary education ought to be accessible to all social classes.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

Only 6 percent saw any clear relationship between religion and technological studies, and only 4 percent saw technical careers as a means of living and practicing Christianity. However, only one-fourth agreed with the statement that philosophical studies were more suitable for Christians than technical studies. Similarly, fewer than one in ten saw any positive relationship between technical progress and spiritual values. A quarter of the students felt that these two ideas were almost completely unrelated.

As far as social change is concerned, only 10 percent felt that their religious values obliged them to work to bring about change; however, 21 percent agreed that God favors greater equality for mankind. Only about 25 percent felt that the causes of social discontent are rooted in social injustice and the inefficiency of social organization; nearly as many insisted upon the need to change these traditions. Only about one in five agreed with the notion that "the Lord helps those who help themselves." Nearly an equal number believed that the best solution is to accept things as they are. Fewer than 2 percent, however, believed that any change in the status quo would be dangerous.

In general, the students in Protestant secondary schools were most inclined to favor religious values which the researchers judge to be compatible with the tasks of constructing a new society. However, a conservative outlook was common. Almost half of all the students thought that the poor get only what they deserve; more than half the students in Catholic colegios recommended resignation, or acceptance of the will of God, as appropriate behavior.<sup>29</sup> Clearly, most of these schools did

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., pp. 4, 6-7, 10-11, 13-14, and 29.

not appear to be building the values needed in a developing nation.

Efficiency of Secondary Schooling. Many Colombians do not doubt that secondary education, on the whole, is a positive experience. Their principal concern is more efficient utilization of its resources. One aspect of this problem is wastage due to the dropout, as these 1965 data illustrate:

Secondary Enrollments by Grade Level (1965)<sup>30</sup>

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
142,156	92,655	68,154	47,804	32,270	21,763

Who drops out and why? Males are far more likely than females to complete secondary education; private school students are more likely to complete their program than public school students, partly because they represent a more affluent social class. Also, the rate of enrollment retention in secondary education is greater than in elementary education, but this is to be expected in view of the more select group which completes elementary and begins secondary schooling. The secondary retention rates have also improved in recent years, however.<sup>31</sup>

A host of other secondary education difficulties have been identified. One of these is the lack of guidance. A national teacher's union favors a basic secondary education to prepare students not going on to university study for successful work in one of various practical occupations. The union complains that the present bachiller receives a great deal of

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<sup>30</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. VII, op. cit., p. 99.

<sup>31</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., pp. 129-32.

miscellaneous knowledge which does little to prepare him for any specific job.<sup>32</sup> Another difficulty concerns class structure. A Ministry of Education report to Congress criticizes secondary education for its role as an accentuator of social differences rather than as an instrument for vertical mobility. While poor families need their children's labor for income and cannot provide the cost of sending them to school, the well-to-do can afford to support their children longer in school. Thus they are able to retain their higher social status. The few secondary schools to which the poor have the easiest access, such as industrial, agricultural, and vocational schools, tend to function in such a way as to discourage upward mobility. For most students, the principal reason for finishing secondary or higher studies is the social status conferred by the resultant diploma or degree.<sup>33</sup>

Other Stresses. Critics from the Roman Catholic Church found that the 1962 curricular reform continued to be too pansophic. They also expressed disappointment that it no longer taught philosophy in the basic cycle, or required Latin. There was additional disappointment because accounting was omitted from the third year, since it was of practical value to those who dropped out of school early. The general theme of the church's criticism was that secondary schools should be allowed to determine their own curriculum.<sup>34</sup>

Many private secondary schools thrive on their ability to cater to the needs of a particular elite sector of society. For example,

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<sup>32</sup> Renovación Educativa, September, 1967, p. 13.

<sup>33</sup> Arango, op. cit., pp. 45 and 70.

<sup>34</sup> Alfonso Uribe Misa, La Libertad de Enseñanza en Colombia, Medellin: Editorial Bedout, 1962, pp. 536-38.

schools conducted in a foreign language are highly esteemed. They are also usually expensive. On the other hand, when a North American-inspired school sought to mix students of different social backgrounds, the idea met with very limited acceptance.

The reform of elementary education which went into effect in 1963 designated the rural elementary school as a five-year institution. Prior to this reform, rural students (most of whom were very poor) were effectively excluded from secondary education by the shorter rural school program. Now that the institutional barrier to secondary education is being removed, the pressure of lower social classes for access to secondary education is being greatly increased. Church spokesmen have urged that a subsidy be given to parents of poorer children so that these children may attend the private or public secondary school or university of their choice. Assistance would be graduated inversely proportional to the parents' ability to pay. The apportionment of aid to departmental secondary schools is frequently criticized because it is granted on a political rather than a necessity basis.

#### Secondary Education Reforms

A great many secondary reforms have been proposed in recent years. The most important to be put into effect was decree 45 of 1962. The purpose of this curriculum reform is to guarantee a general (or liberal) education to the increasing number of students who reach secondary schooling, even if they decide to discontinue their formal education and go to work after a few years of study. The greater uniformity of the first four years of secondary schooling required by Decree 45 will enable

students who wish to transfer from one kind of secondary institution to another to do so prior to their last two years of specialization. The provision will enable others, who originally plan to go on to the university but for some reason change their minds, to shift to a middle-level technical specialization or to a teacher-training program during their last two years of secondary study. The 1962 and subsequent reforms give the student a wider range of options at a somewhat later stage of his secondary career.

Other reforms have paved the way for an expansion of secondary enrollments. These include: double sessions, parallel schools, night schools, cooperative schools, and radio schools -- all designed to aid the student with limited resources to complete his secondary schooling. Efforts are also being made to combine the resources of small secondary schools so that their advanced courses can function with greater economy.<sup>35</sup>

Night Schools. Decree 486 of 1962 authorized a program for the bachillerato which may be taken in no less than seven years of night study. The following course requirements are deleted from the night school program: esthetic education, industrial arts, home economics, physical education, and extra-curricular activities. The rate of study is 630 class hours per year, as compared with 1,140 hours in the regular academic secondary program.

When space is available in night school, auditing is permitted. If an auditor attends class regularly, he may be granted a certificate of attendance, which the Ministry of Education may accept as the basis of

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<sup>35</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 10.

a validation examination. A total of five official institutions were operating night schools in various cities in 1965. The institutions were identified variously as liceos, institutos, externados (non-residential), and colegios.<sup>36</sup>

Another special provision for secondary education is the parallel secondary school (colegio paralelo), authorized by decree 455 of 1964. These schools share official school facilities; however, students pay a modest tuition to cover the salaries of the additional teachers needed for the parallel school. The double session plan applies only in the basic cycle and each session meets six hours daily.<sup>37</sup> Decree 155 of 1967 set low tuition rates based on parental income for students attending afternoon sessions of secondary schools. This encourages fuller use of existing facilities. In addition, children of teachers in official schools and the best two students in each course are exempted from tuition and board charges. Similarly, reductions of from 20 to 50 percent of the child's room and board are granted to parents with more than one child in official schools.

Cooperative Secondary Schools. One of the first cooperative secondary schools was founded in Ciudad Kennedy, a new working-class suburb of Bogota. Authorized by Decree 455 of 1964, the law was designed to encourage community groups to function as cooperative societies and to establish non-profit schools to extend through the first

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<sup>36</sup> Gómez, Memoria del Ministro de Educación Nacional, Vol. IV, op. cit., p. 35.

<sup>37</sup> Pedro Gómez Valderrama, Conferencia Dictada por el Señor Ministro de Educación en la Escuela Superior de Administración Pública, el Día 7 de Mayo de 1965, Bogota: Duplicaciones Mineducación, 1966, pp. 12-13, 22-23.

cycle (4 years) of secondary education.

The 1968 prospectus for one such institution in Bogota, Colegio Cooperativo ADEPAF (Parents Association Cooperative Secondary School), stresses that the economic purposes of the cooperative should not conflict with the educational function of the school. Its main purpose is to provide inexpensive private secondary education to families of limited income. Entrance to the institution requires successful completion of the fifth year of elementary school plus an admission examination. Features include: (1) scholarships to students of limited means who possess outstanding ability and do good work, (2) honorable mention each month to recognize outstanding students, and (3) annual awards to students for personal effort, good fellowship, and a cooperative attitude, with the names of the recipients engraved on a special plaque. The school also provides medical, dental, and barber services, as well as accident insurance. Charges for members of the cooperative ranged from 50 pesos to 75 pesos per month for the fourth year, plus a 10-peso monthly cooperative fee. Non-member charges ranged from 70 to 100 pesos.<sup>38</sup>

One such institution, the Cooperative Educational Unit FECODE, is operated by the Colombian Federation of Educators. It seeks to demonstrate that more modern, less rote-teaching techniques can be carried out in a pedagogically sound manner at low cost. Despite the gradual extension of this type of private secondary school, however, there are doubts that cooperative colegios will ever thrive. This is because, in an effort to reduce costs to serve the economically marginal family, they

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<sup>38</sup>Pesos were worth about 6.2¢ U. S.

will gradually reduce educational quality; consequently, they will fail to attract a sufficient number of families which will insist upon more than minimum quality instruction.

National Institutes of Middle Education (INDEM)

The Alliance for Progress, along with other assistance, made possible in 1963 the expansion of rural elementary education (Decree 1710) from two to five years. Naturally, this has greatly increased the demand for public secondary education. Therefore, 19 National Institutes of Middle Education (comprehensive secondary schools) are to be built in departmental capitals. President Lleras has committed his government to the development of these schools by 1970. Plans call for them to be in full operation by 1972. The official loan application was submitted to the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development in October, 1967, asking for 16.1 million dollars, which covers approximately 50 percent of the construction and equipment costs of the first 10 schools. By 1968, a 7.6 million dollar loan had been approved. The larger class size expected in the proposed schools (about 24 to 1) should result in a more efficient utilization of resources at little increase in cost per pupil. The United States Government will provide assistance in training Colombian administrators and specialists for the new institutions.

The National Institutes of Middle Education (INDEM) are designed to place students from a wide variety of social backgrounds into a single institution. Some specific situations which these new Institutes

hope to improve are as follows:<sup>39</sup>

- (1) Small public secondary schools (especially in big cities) have relatively high costs because their limited size does not permit efficient use of administrative and specialized personnel.
- (2) The small, single-curriculum school fails to give the student an opportunity to select programs related to his ability and interest; this rigidity is regarded as a major factor in school dropout.
- (3) Small schools attract select social groups which retard the country's development by taking a deprecatory position toward manual labor.
- (4) Secondary education is not an integrated whole; each school tends to emphasize its own specialty.
- (5) Many existing secondary programs do not correspond to recent social and scientific changes in Colombian life.
- (6) There is now only limited transfer from one type of secondary school to another, due primarily to difference in curriculum. Since pupils are frequently too immature at the beginning of their secondary career to choose an appropriate professional program, transfer is frequently needed.

The National Institutes of Middle Education emphasize helping students explore their interests more fully so that they can choose from a wider variety of curricula with the aid of a school guidance counselor. The Institutes also will seek to provide a kind of education which makes it easier, both psychologically and vocationally, to enter directly into dignified practical employment.

In addition, larger but still moderate class-size will reduce considerably both teacher and administration costs per student. It is expected that the new Institutes may encounter certain problems. Plans

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<sup>39</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Aspectos Comunes, Vol. III, pp. 1-4.

call for placing them in relatively poor districts where the lack of secondary education is most glaring. As a consequence, they may be unable to attract enough able students from other social classes. They may then fail to accomplish the desired social integration with other classes. Also, the small number of students who have graduated from vocational courses in the past does not encourage optimism about the diversification of enrollments anticipated in the advanced (second) cycle of the new Institutes. Since in the past, very few vocational students have gone beyond the fourth year of secondary school, it seems unlikely that entry into vocational education can be successfully postponed until the second cycle of elementary education.<sup>40</sup> Despite these misgivings, however, there is considerable agreement that the new Institutes, once completed, will make a vital contribution to the extension of secondary education to all classes of Colombians.

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<sup>40</sup>Zschock, op. cit., pp. 98-99.

## CHAPTER 8

### VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The education referred to in this chapter is generally known to Colombians as educación profesional or educación vocacional. In English it is most often called vocational education. As in other Latin American countries, vocational education in Colombia has developed slowly, primarily because of the low status generally accorded manual labor.

Most vocational schooling is directed towards the preparation of the skilled workers and middle-level technicians required in national productive activity; it also prepares some students to continue a technical specialization at the university level. For this reason, it is offered in a variety of institutions. Some of these are part of the academic secondary program, but others are special vocational schools. Another important part of the nation's vocational education effort is administered by the National Apprenticeship Service (SENA), which will be discussed later.

Of the total 880 secondary level (media) vocational schools in 1964, 445 were dedicated to commercial studies, 90 to industrial, and 59 to agricultural instruction. There were 286 others. In addition there were more than 300 normal schools for the training of elementary teachers.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Instituto Interamericano de Estadística, op. cit., p. 81.

In 1963 there were 60 establishments described as complementary schools. These institutions offer a two-year course designed to extend education especially in the rural areas beyond the general elementary level.<sup>2</sup>

#### Commercial Education

The most popular area of vocational study is commercial or business education. Private schools predominate, claiming 74.6 percent of the 1965 commercial school enrollment. Nearly three-quarters of the total enrollment are women, with 82.4 percent of them in private institutions. Enrollments in this area increased 445 percent between 1950 and 1965. The special appeal of commercial education is that it represents a short cut to comparatively remunerative white-collar jobs. In 1962 only five out of the 57 public commercial secondary schools enrolled both men and women (mixtas), while 112 of the 416 private institutions enrolled both sexes.<sup>3</sup> In 1964 62 public schools served 3,528 men and 6,721 women, while 383 private schools served 9,100 men and 31,046 women.<sup>4</sup>

The basic legislation which affects commercial education is found in Decrees 45 and 2117 of 1962. Table 7 compares the general academic curriculum with the commercial curriculum.

As the above comparison indicates, commercial education may be taken at two levels. Students who finish the first four years of the secondary

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<sup>2</sup> Galbraith, op. cit., p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 197.

<sup>4</sup> DANE, La Educación . . . , op. cit., p. 22.

TABLE 7

A COMPARISON OF THE CURRICULA OF  
 THE GENERAL ACADEMIC SECONDARY PROGRAM (BACHILLERATO)  
 AND COMMERCIAL EDUCATION<sup>5</sup>

Courses	Basic Cycle						Second Cycle		
	1st Yr. Gen. Bus.	2nd Yr. Gen. Bus.	3rd Yr. Gen. Bus.	4th Yr. Gen. Bus.	5th Yr. Gen. Bus.	6th Yr. Gen. Bus.			
Religious and Moral Education	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	1
Psychology							2	2	
Philosophy							3	3	4
Natural Sciences	2	2	2	2	2	4	4		
Social Studies	5	5	7	7	7	4	4	1	2
Spanish & Liter.	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	3
Foreign Languages	3	3	3	3	3	3	5	5	5
Mathematics	5	5	4	4	5	5	3	3	2
Physics							4	4	4
Chemistry							4	4	4
Physical Educ.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	
Esthetic Educ.	2	3	2	2	1	2	1		
Industrial Arts/ Home Economics	2	2	2	1	2	1	2		
Intensification and Extra Curricular Activities	9	4	8	3	7	3	7	3	11
Typing				2					
Stenography				2			2	3	2
Bookeeping					2		2		
Shorthand						3	2		1
Office Practice								2	
Business Math.								2	
Economics								2	2
Statistics									1
Business Psychology									
Elements of Business									2
Law									2
Labor Law									1
Business Corres.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38

<sup>5</sup> Gómez, Memoria del Ministro de Educación Nacional, Vol. IV, op. cit., p. 45.

curriculum and who complete a year of experience in enterprises which attest to their efficiency will be granted the diploma of expert (experto). Similar certification is authorized in technical education.<sup>6</sup> The diploma of commercial science (bachiller técnico comercial) requires two additional years after the first cycle of commercial study.

Compensatory courses of one year are offered to those who have completed a non-commercial basic cycle. This grants the diploma of assistant in accounting and administration (auxiliar de contabilidad y secretariado). The diploma of commercial secretary is also based on two years of study following the first cycle. Legislation in 1962, 1963, and 1965 authorizes these diplomas.

International correspondence courses may in certain circumstances be accepted by the Ministry of Education. A certificate is issued describing work completed and grades received.<sup>7</sup> There is a four-year school in accounting in Barranquilla which requires for admission prior completion of secondary commercial preparation.

#### Industrial Education

The principal objectives of industrial education are to prepare personnel needed in various occupations or by different levels of Colombian industry, while they also complete their general education. This implies inculcating in them a sense of responsibility and an awareness of the relationship between their work and the economic and industrial development

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<sup>6</sup>Decree 2433 of September 11, 1959, pp. 8-9.

<sup>7</sup>Decree 2117 of August 1, 1962, p.8.

of the country. The programs are based upon Decree 2433 of 1959, which established three different levels -- industrial schools with cycles of four or five years and technical institutes with a cycle of six years.

The four-year industrial schools function in towns and medium-sized cities. Principal subjects are mechanics, electricity, foundry, metal-work, smelting and welding, printing, drafting, cabinet work, and, in some schools, ceramics, saddlemaking, shoemaking, tailoring, and rattan weaving. These schools give the diploma of experto.

The higher technical institutes are found in major industrial centers. Basic courses are shop and technology, mathematics, technical drawing, natural sciences, foreign languages, social sciences, religion, and general education activities. More specialized courses are mechanics, motors, electricity, foundry, locksmith, drafting, electronics, etc. After five years of study, the diploma of expert is granted; after six years, the diploma of technical baccalaureate (bachiller técnico). About 39 hours a week are spent in class.<sup>8</sup>

Enrollments in industrial education occur principally in public institutions, with 86.9 percent in 1965. Of the total enrollment, 87 percent were men. Enrollments increased 419 percent between 1950 and 1965 to a total of 18,553 students.

Until 1960, industrial education was part of the commercial education section of the Ministry of Education. In 1965 there were 542 full-time teachers in national schools, 298 of which were in technical fields. Of these, only 19 percent had university preparation, and 42 percent had

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<sup>8</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., pp. 71-72.

fewer than six years of post-elementary training.<sup>9</sup>

In large industrial centers such as Medellin, Cali, Barranquilla, and Bucaramanga, there has been a favorable labor market for students from the technical institutes (institutos técnicos). The proliferation of industrial schools (escuelas Industriales), however, as a result of legislative initiatives or regional interest, has produced a larger but more poorly qualified manpower pool. At present, much of the National Apprenticeship Service's training of workers is similar to that of the technical institutes, and graduates of the institutes serve as SENA's instructors. The Committee of Coordination between the Ministry of Education and SENA seeks to avoid such duplication of effort.<sup>10</sup>

There is general agreement that there are not enough students in industrial education to supply the country's needs. Schools need to be located in areas more accessible to interested students. In addition, many of the better institutions need more support; and many lesser institutions are poorly equipped for their task.

Executive Training. The Colombian Institute of Administration (INCOLDA) is the nation's most important organization for improving the capabilities of executives and managerial personnel. Founded as a private organization in 1959, it has six centers in the major economic regions of the country. During its first seven years, it gave 46,152 participants courses varying in length from one week to several months. Its programs

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<sup>9</sup> Gómez, Memorial de Ministro de Educación Nacional, Vol. IV, op. cit., p. 45.

<sup>10</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., pp. 78-79.

are financed through tuition and institutional memberships.<sup>11</sup>

### Agricultural Education

In 1941 the Colombian government, on the recommendation of a mission from Puerto Rico, established a system of vocational agricultural schools. By 1964, there were 53 public and six private agricultural institutions. Enrollments, although small, increased from 350 in 1950 to 3,760 in 1965, with 92.5 percent of the total in public institutions. Only 4.3 percent were women.<sup>12</sup> In 1965 only 2 out of a group of 37 public vocational agricultural schools offered as many as four years of secondary education. Enrollments were distributed as follows: elementary annex (anexo) -- 457, prevocational -- 381, first year of secondary -- 973, second year of secondary -- 592, third year of secondary -- 406, and fourth year of secondary -- 36.<sup>13</sup> Peace Corps volunteers taught English and recreation in seven of these schools. In addition, supplemental funds provide money for special projects. The fruits of this labor are divided between the school (60 percent) and the students (40 percent) in proportion to their work. Typically, the program consists of one year of prevocational education, which corresponds to the fifth year of elementary school, and two of secondary (media) education. Normal education, in preparing teachers for this area, consists of a secondary cycle of six years.

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<sup>11</sup> Zschock, op. cit., p. 109.

<sup>12</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 44.

<sup>13</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional and Instituto Colombiano Agropecuario, Solicitud para un Proyecto de Educación Agrícola a Nivel Medio Presentado al Fondo Especial de Naciones Unidas, Bogota: ca. 1967, Figure 1, n.p.

From January, 1967 on, the above schools will function as secondary agricultural schools (escuelas agropecuarias), and will teach the four-year basic cycle of secondary education. Co-programmatic activities will be dedicated exclusively to agricultural subjects. Schools which are unable to attain secondary standards will become elementary institutions.<sup>14</sup>

Supplemental Activities. Decree 1003 of 1961 calls for the formation of a parents' association in every school (asociación de padres de familia). It also calls for the establishment of a chapter of the Association of Future Farmers of Colombia (Club 4C), to consist of regular students plus those who have been out of school for less than three years. This latter organization is an integral part of the school's program; it is not extra-curricular. Decree Law 1598 of 1963 calls for the formation of school or youth cooperatives with an agricultural emphasis, to include sections dealing with consumption, production, credit and savings, and special services. Here the method most commonly favored is the project method, which aims at developing practical skills.<sup>15</sup> In addition to the above, there are about 600 4-S clubs (Saber, Sentimiento, Servicio, and Salud, meaning knowledge, kindness, service and health), with over 12,000 young members of both sexes who work on agricultural and home improvement projects. There are also 70 home improvement clubs, which enroll about 800 housewives who receive practical courses in domestic science.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Decretos, Resoluciones y Convenios sobre la Educación Agropecuaria, Bogota: Editorial Bedout, 1967, p. 10.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 56, 60, and 87.

<sup>16</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 226.

In vocational agricultural schools, the director is aided by an advisory committee of professors of his choice and, together with a chief fiscal officer, they meet weekly to determine policy. There is also an advisory committee of vocational teachers. A large percentage of the work done in these schools is general education, not vocational. (See Table 8.)

Technical Agricultural Institutes. Beginning in January, 1967, the agricultural normal schools of Paipa, Buga, and Lorica became technical agricultural institutes (institutos técnicos agropecuarios). These new institutes are a dependency of the Division of Higher and Normal Education of the Ministry of National Education. Admission is based upon completion of the basic cycle of the secondary school. Their program consists of three additional years which integrate the subject matter of the second cycle of secondary education with an additional year of agricultural subjects. This leads to the diploma of bachiller técnico agrícola, thus qualifying the student for admittance to the university. The technical agricultural institutes function with the advice of the Colombian Institute of Agriculture. Each one is to have a revolving fund (fondo rotatorio) to integrate agricultural production projects with teaching activities.<sup>17</sup> The Institute of Rural Education at Pamplona and the Higher Institute of Rural Guidance for Women at Bogota are being converted into institutions to prepare secondary teachers to serve in these schools. (See Table 9.)

Each of the technical agricultural institutes has a professional committee, which includes the rector, who presides, the local director of the Colombian Institute of Agriculture or his representative, a

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<sup>17</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Decretos . . . op. cit., p. 8.

TABLE 8

THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE PORTION <sup>18</sup>  
 OF THE BASIC CYCLE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION  
 (Expressed in hours per week)

	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year
<u>Livestock</u>				
Rabbit growing	2			
Poultry Raising	2			
Ewes		2		
Rams		1		
Beekeeping		1		
Young Swine			1	1
Young Cattle			1	1
Young Horses			1	1
<u>Agriculture</u>				
Crops	7	6	5	5
<u>Farm Shopwork</u>				
Carpentry and ropemaking	1	1		
Masonry	1	1		
Rural Construction and Carpentry			1	1
Plumbing, brassworking, ironworking and farm mechanics			1	1
Ironworking, farm mechanics, and electricity				2
<u>Cooperativism</u>				
Constitution, organiza- tion, and operation of cooperatives. Nature and purposes of farm cooperatives.	1			
Colombian cooperative legislation, cooperative practice, cooperative accounting		1		
Cooperative economics, Individualism, Liberal economic doctrines			1	
Philosophy of Cooperation Economic democracy cooperative practice				1

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., pp. 21-23.

TABLE 9

CURRICULUM FOR TECHNICAL AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTES<sup>19</sup>  
 (Expressed in Hours per Week per School Year)

	5th Year	6th Year	7th Year
<u>Academic Subjects</u>			
Religious Education	1	1	1
Psychology	2	-	-
Philosophy	3	2	2
Social Studies (Colombian Institutions, International Citizenship, Institutions for Rural Development, and Sociology)	2	1	2
Spanish and Literature	2	2	2
Foreign Languages (English, French)	4	4	2
Mathematics	3	2	-
Physics	4	4	-
Chemistry	4	4	-
Physical Education and Sports	3	3	3
Esthetic Education (Music, Singing, Drawing)	2	2	2
<u>Vocational Subjects</u>			
Soils	-	4	4
Animal Industry	4	3	-
Fruit Growing and Gardening	4	2	-
Plagues and Diseases	-	4	4
Crops	-	3	3
Forestry	-	-	2
Irrigation and Drainage	-	-	3
Farm Technology	-	-	3
Farm Machinery and Machine Shop	-	-	3
Farm Administration, including Credit	-	-	3
Agricultural Extension and Vocational Teaching	-	1	3
Accounting and Cooperativism	3	-	-
Library	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>43</b>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., pp. 67-68.

representative of the teachers of general education (chosen by the teachers), and representatives of the teachers of agricultural subjects (also chosen by them). Students who have taken appropriate courses under SENA may also have their work accepted if relevant to this program. In addition, the institutes may offer short courses to train their students in the techniques of agricultural extension.

Agricultural Extension. Modern agricultural extension methods introduced by an agency of the Point Four Program in 1954 have been widely employed not only by the Ministry of Agriculture but also by most departmental secretariats of agriculture. These programs are staffed by agricultural engineers and home improvement workers trained to make effective educational contact with peasants in their own communities. Responsibility for extension work in agriculture has recently been transferred from the Ministry of Agriculture to the Colombian Institute of Agriculture.

Despite government efforts in agricultural education, it is estimated that all the programs together reach no more than 20 percent of the rural population.<sup>20</sup> A more serious problem is that the other types of education (namely, general secondary, normal, and industrial schools) situated in rural areas frequently make few relevant contributions to the communities in which they are located because their graduates usually migrate to the cities. Thus the two most useful institutions are the agricultural schools described above and rural schools for girls.<sup>21</sup> One weakness of the

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<sup>20</sup> Zschock, op. cit., p. 117.

<sup>21</sup> Jiménez, op. cit., p. 257.

agricultural schools is that as many as one-sixth of their students come from urban areas. Similarly, about one-fourth of their former students have followed non-agricultural occupations.<sup>22</sup>

Rural Cooperative Education. The Colombian Institute of Agrarian Reform (INCORA) has been active in offering short courses to improve the efficiency of rural cooperatives. In one four-year period INCORA gave more than a hundred short courses for the managers of rural cooperatives. A newly-developed team concerned with rural development has been designated to function in those areas where land reform is in progress, which, in fact, includes most areas of the country. The new educational program, which began functioning in 1968, emphasizes arithmetic, literacy, and civic education and has as its aim to teach peasants to work together in efforts of improve their livelihood. If peasants fail to participate in these cooperatives, they may be denied loan credit. Courses are offered in marketing cooperatives, hygiene, practical nursing, swine production, and leadership training. The aim of INCORA's team is to work with the other agencies concerned with these problems including the Peace Corps, in advisory, supervisory, and evaluative capacities. Each of the ten project teams includes a sociologist, a social worker, a home economics specialist, and an extension specialist. The program is aided by the Agency for International Development and other sponsors.

Complementary Education. The classification of complementary education is comprised of several miscellaneous kinds of instruction not literally grouped under that label. It is a rather statistical grouping of various types of vocational education carried on in special institutions,

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<sup>22</sup>Legters, op. cit., p. 159.

which provide not only secondary instruction but also training for specific occupations. In 1964 there were 424 men and 5,443 women enrolled in 66 official complementary schools. Private institutions classified under this term enrolled 202 men and 2,784 women in 33 different facilities.<sup>23</sup>

#### Women's Vocational Education

Women achieved equality of opportunity for education with men following the 1957 plebiscite. Some ladies serve in Congress and in other responsible administrative positions. Many younger upper-class women are active in the professions, and there now appears to be little prejudice against their serving in positions of leadership. Four kinds of schools offer vocational education for women. These, which will be described briefly, are: (1) supplementary and higher polytechnical schools, (2) schools for rural home visitors, (3) farm-home schools, and (4) auxiliary schools of rural nursing.

The six women's polytechnical schools require completion of the five-year elementary school for admission. They offer a three-year course leading to the experto diploma in a selected specialization and emphasize knowledge about earning a living and operating small industries. Some of these schools offer an additional two-year course to qualify their graduates as elementary teachers.

Schools for rural home visitors require for admission five years of elementary education and a minimum age of 18, to ensure that students have sufficient maturity to work in rural community development. The course

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<sup>23</sup>DANE, La Educación . . . , op. cit., pp. 17-18.

consists of one year of pre-vocational and three years of technical training, including fundamental subject matter such as mathematics, language, natural science, religion, etc., plus other subjects of a professional nature, including medical information, nutrition and diet, first aid, child care, preventive medicine, legal information, socio-economic subject matter, psychology, social service, entertainment, folklore activities and recreation, and home economics. In January, 1967, the Ministry of Education's Higher Institute of Rural Guidance for Women became the Institute of Rural Education. This institute is to be exclusively responsible for preparing teachers for community development in rural areas.<sup>24</sup>

Farm-home elementary schools seek to elevate living standards among rural girls between the ages of 14 and 20 by providing at least three years of elementary schooling. In 1964 there were 39 public schools of this type enrolling 2,217 women, plus six private schools with 422 women.

Auxiliary schools of rural nursing offer women between the ages of 18 and 25 a three-year course based on five years of elementary instruction. There is only one official school, but there are 24 private institutions, most of them functioning with university sponsorship. Graduates receive the diploma of nurse's aide. Apparently at a different level, the National Department of Statistics reported that there were 12 schools preparing nurse's aides in 1964 -- six official and six private, enrolling a total of 538 women.<sup>25</sup> There is a serious shortage of nurses in Colombia compared to the number of medical doctors available.

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<sup>24</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Decretos . . . , op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>25</sup> DANE, La Educación . . . , op. cit., p. 26.

In addition to these four kinds of vocational schools there were a significant number of women enrolled in artistic education. For example, in 1964, 4,791 students were taking artistic training in 19 public institutions. There were also 975 students in ten private establishments serving artistic interests. Slightly over half of this number were women.<sup>26</sup>

#### Military Education

The armed forces provide two types of training. One enhances the military competency of professional officers and soldiers, and the other provides fundamental education for recruits who later will return to civilian life. Four institutions, enrolling 773 men in 1966, functioned on the secondary or higher level -- two in Bogota and one each in Cali and Cartagena.<sup>27</sup> For ordinary soldiers, strictly military education may be complemented with academic subjects up to the first year of general secondary school. Some further specialized training is also offered. More than 3,000 soldiers were receiving such training in various fundamental skills in the mid-1960's. For those soldiers about to complete their term of military service, SENA in 1967 established a program of agricultural training in five centers, under contract with the armed forces. Study at the officer level requires at least the fourth year of

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>27</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Estadísticas Globales de la Educación Superior en Colombia, 1960-1966, Bogota, 1967, pp. 10-11.

academic secondary education. A second lieutenant may be commissioned after three years of study, following receipt of his baccalaureate diploma.<sup>28</sup>

#### The National Apprenticeship Service (SENA)

The National Apprenticeship Service is Colombia's most unique contribution to industrial and vocational education and has been emulated in several other Latin American countries. It is a semi-autonomous agency of the Ministry of Labor, and is supported by a payroll tax levied upon employers. The agency has its national headquarters in Bogota, but it is served by regional offices in all 22 departments.

SENA's directive council consists of representatives from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labor, the Cardinal Archbishop, Primate of Colombia, representatives from industry (The National Association of Manufacturers), from business (The National Federation of Businessmen), from the Association of Small Industries, and from farmers, cattlemen, and workers, and their respective organizations. SENA is also advised by officials of the International Labor Organization (Geneva).<sup>29</sup> The service is particularly well-financed, due partly to the close political support it receives from powerful unions such as the Union of Colombian Workers and the Confederation of Colombian Workers. Expenditures amounted in 1965 to 128,895,000 pesos.

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<sup>28</sup> Arango, op. cit., p. 28.

<sup>29</sup> Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje (SENA), La Formación Profesional en Colombia, Bogota: Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje 1967, pp. 11-12.

According to Law 58 enacted in 1963, all private businesses and public corporations whose capital is more than 50,000 pesos, or who have more than 10 permanent employees, must contribute to SENA. These organizations are taxed six percent of their monthly payrolls, 4 percent of which goes to family subsidies and 2 percent to SENA. Official organizations also contribute one-half of one percent. Twenty percent of this money goes to the organization's national office, which has responsibility for advising, supervising, and planning of SENA programs.<sup>30</sup>

The organization's principal aim is to provide vocational and practical preparation to enable workers to perform more effectively, both technically and personally. Instead of providing training for a specific industry based on its contribution to the central organization, SENA offers training to sectors of industry and commerce where the greatest need lies. Need is determined by detailed surveys of employment conditions. Applicants for training are selected on a basis of superior qualifications and the program is directed toward youths between the ages of 14 and 20 who have finished elementary education, or its equivalent. Training does not exceed three years and is usually alternated with employment in one of the sponsoring businesses.

Other SENA programs are directed toward adult employees. One of these is supplementary training (complementación) in a selected field, to upgrade a worker's skills. Such training usually lasts about a year and is carried out during the employee's free time. Other courses seek to overcome deficiencies in basic education which hinder a worker's performance

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<sup>30</sup> Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje (SENA), Una Década al Servicio de Colombia, 1957-1967, Bogota: Antares-Tercer Mundo, 1967, n. p.

of his duties. Training also is offered for semi-skilled jobs, for jobs at higher levels of supervisory responsibility, and for a specific technical vocation.<sup>31</sup>

Training contracts may be arranged between SENA and an industry if it has more than 20 permanent employees, and if its apprentices do not exceed more than five percent of its total labor force. Service is also provided to agriculture, although industry is the focus of most of the programs.

Origins. The Union of Colombian Workers at their national congress in Medellin in 1954 requested the government to create an institution for the training of workers. The next year the government created the Colombian Institute for Labor Training. In 1956, the International Labor Organization came to Colombia to study the operation of the new Institute and recommended certain improvements based on experience in Brazil in the same field. SENA was created in 1957 and in 1959 the first program began when 26 businesses in Antioquia undertook to sponsor the training of 123 apprentices. Legislation was passed in 1963 which improved SENA's financial support.<sup>32</sup>

SENA is the executive organ of the Ministry of Labor. Although the organization serves all of Colombia, its efforts are greatest in the industrial centers of the departments of Antioquia, Cundinamarca, and Valle, where three of the four major cities are located. The scope of its activities is indicated below:

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<sup>31</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>32</sup> Loc. cit.

TRAINEES SERVED BY THE  
NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP SERVICE (SENA) IN 1965<sup>33</sup>

Area of Specialization	Trainees Enrolled	Students Partially Completing the Programs ( <u>egresados</u> )	Students Successfully Completing the Program
Agriculture	5,331	4,610	4,345
Industrial	14,625	9,942	9,033
Commercial and Services	13,002	8,551	7,517
Total <sup>34</sup>	32,958	23,103	20,895

SENA has had substantial influence on the field of vocational education. From 1958 to the end of 1966, it trained 180,928 workers, of whom 25,811 were apprentices, and 155,117 were adult employees. The organization has 884 full-time and 308 part-time instructors and 722 units (classrooms and shops) with facilities for 13,000 students. In 1966, 5,951 apprentices

<sup>33</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>34</sup> By June, 1967, this total had increased to 33,925 students in 51 vocational training centers. Interamerican Development Bank, op. cit., p. 113.

<sup>35</sup> SENA, La Formación . . ., op. cit., pp. 43 and 44.

and 40,712 adults were enrolled. Forty-seven percent of these were in industrial education, 19 percent were in agriculture, and 34 percent were in service and related fields. SENA has also trained 115 instructors and 25 leaders and promoters in the areas of industrial and vocational training for 13 other Latin American countries.<sup>36</sup>

In agriculture, SENA has done the following: (1) It made training agreements with FAO and Massey-Ferguson concerning farm machinery utilization; (2) It worked with the National Federation of Coffee Growers to provide courses in more effective land utilization; (3) It offered courses to farm credit supervisors and irrigation district supervisors for INCORA; (4) It conducted courses for farm women in domestic science and in labor specialties suited to women; and (5) It received and administered technical assistance from the United Kingdom for sheep raising. Many other foreign countries also have made technical contributions which have been administered by SENA.<sup>37</sup> Its new plan for 1966-1969 is already underway and includes the creation and organization of 41 new training centers, an agreement with the armed forces for vocational training centers for agriculture, livestock, small industries, and mechanization.<sup>38</sup>

Research. With a view to identifying the nation's most urgent vocational needs, SENA has conducted surveys in many areas of the country. An example of how these surveys demonstrate the need for vocational training is illustrated by data from the department of Chocó, one of the

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 18, appendix 2, p. 1, appendix 3, p. 9.

<sup>37</sup> SENA, Una Década . . . , op. cit., n. p.

<sup>38</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 12.

nation's most underdeveloped regions. A study of 21 important job categories there shows that 74.5 percent of administrators in public services, 73.3 percent of cashiers and financial officers, 70.6 percent of retail employees, 84.4 percent of truck drivers, 100 percent of welders, and 68.2 percent of waiters needed further training. Occupations with the least need for further training were unskilled ones such as construction workers -- 2.0 percent, electrical linemen -- 10.0 percent, practical nurses -- 16.3 percent, and carpenters -- 20.7 percent. A need for more rather than better trained personnel was indicated in regard to bookkeepers, accountants, typists, and retail employees. Studies of other regions have shown that needs vary enormously from one section of the country to another.<sup>39</sup>

Problems. There is a feeling at SENA that its programs are of greater relevance to the nation's needs than those conducted by the Ministry of Education. Both the three-year apprenticeship program of SENA and the Ministry of Education vocational courses require five years of elementary schooling as a prerequisite; however, the secondary school reform introduced in 1963 by the Ministry of Education leads to an academically oriented first cycle of four years in most Ministry of Education schools while SENA programs lead directly into vocational training. Consequently, the demand for SENA apprenticeship training is increasing to the extent that regular secondary schools are discontinuing their vocational training programs during the first cycle.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje (SENA), Personal Ocupado y Necesidades de Formación Profesional en la Seccional del Chocó, Bogota: División de Recursos Humanos, Informe de la Encuesta de 1966 en las Divisiones de Actividad Económica 1a9, November, 1967. Similar studies have been prepared for other areas. The one cited deals mainly with Quibdó.

<sup>40</sup> Zschock, op. cit., p. 112.

SENA is also becoming increasingly responsible for blue-collar training, but so far educational opportunities offered by SENA are open to only one-third of the total labor force -- in fact, only to those employed in businesses of a given minimal size. Vocational training is also needed, however, for employees in the smaller businesses, and the Ministry of Education is not well-financed enough to supply this need.

A more fundamental problem exists in the fact that SENA's specialized courses usually train workers for specific jobs, rather than providing them with more general occupational skills. Therefore, these workers may have to be retrained continuously as the industries modernize, in effect restricting SENA's potential for rapid expansion of its service to additional workers.<sup>41</sup> A related problem is that of personal development. Workers may be considered valuable employees for reasons other than their technical skill; thus a worker who is dependable, who arrives to work on time, who is careful, and who has a sense of responsibility is more valuable than a worker lacking these qualities. SENA is aware of this dimension of training and seeks to add it whenever possible. Personal development, however, is also a responsibility of general education and, although the Ministry of Education may not always be effective in this area, it would be much more so if it were as well-financed as SENA. One advantage possessed by SENA is that it provides training which seems to serve the immediate purpose of national development in a material sense, even if it does reach only a very small proportion of the working force.

Another difficulty encountered by SENA concerns the selection of adults for training, since these trainees usually want to prepare for jobs

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., pp. 113-115.

other than those in which they are presently employed. However, the purpose of the SENA program is to better qualify them in positions directly or closely related to the ones they originally held. SENA also recognizes the fact that most workers need fundamental literacy and mathematical skills before technical training becomes feasible. This problem makes the development of rural training programs especially difficult. Rural workers are in greatest need of SENA's skills. This sector, represented by 46.8 percent of the businesses which contribute to SENA and employing 50 percent of working age people, produces only 9.1 percent of the taxable salaries which support SENA's efforts.<sup>42</sup>

#### General Criticisms

A number of broad criticisms have been leveled against the Ministry of Education during the past five years. First, there is a claim that its programs of industrial education do not correspond to the needs of industry. Secondly, it is claimed that the milieu of the schools does not develop the fundamental attitudes or personal values necessary for the effective practice of a trade or profession. Students are often said to lack judgment and ability to adapt to varying circumstances. A third problem is that many industrial, agricultural, and commercial schools still have programs so different in their vocational aspects, that easy transfer from one specialty to another is impeded. For example, after a year of metalwork or carpentry, during his second year a student would not be regarded as prepared to study motor mechanics or electronics. It

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<sup>42</sup> Rudolfo Martínez Tono, Una Revolución Pacífica, Bogota: Ediciones Tercer Mundo, 1967, p. 42.

is suggested that these programs be reoriented so that they more effectively complement the work of the National Apprenticeship Service. As a matter of fact, some effort has already been made to accept vocational courses given by SENA for credit toward relevant portions of the bachillerato program in official secondary schools. This adjustment is important because the limitation of places in secondary vocational schools often forces the student to enroll in a traditional academic bachillerato program even though his interest is in vocational subjects.<sup>43</sup> Colombian educators recognize these problems and are making every effort to effect lasting improvements.

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<sup>43</sup>Arango, op. cit., pp. 52, 76, and 23.

## CHAPTER 9

### HIGHER EDUCATION

There are many more universities in Colombia than in any other Latin American or European country. Almost all of them are highly academic teaching institutions dedicated primarily to the preparation of individuals for the professions. With few exceptions, responsibility for liberal education has been relegated to secondary education. Moreover, despite its growing stature, research in most Colombian universities has been more of an ideal than a reality. Because the learned professions have always been highly regarded in Latin America, the university is in many ways the intellectual and political heart of Latin American life. There is, however, a more pragmatic need for high level training. A 1965 study showed that 64.1 percent of Colombian administrative personnel had no higher education; in fact, even 8.2 percent of those working as professionals had completed only secondary or elementary schooling.<sup>1</sup>

Since the typical university program prepares almost exclusively for a particular profession, all of a student's courses are taken in one college or department (facultad) of the university. The curriculum usually devotes little or no time to the liberal arts, and there is seldom

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<sup>1</sup> Instituto Colombiano de Especialización Técnica en el Exterior (ICETEX), Recursos y Requerimientos de Personal de Alto Nivel, 1964-1975, Bogota: ICETEX, Departamento de Recursos Humanos, 1965, p. 85.

an opportunity for electives. The university facultades feel that they are completely competent to determine the curricula of their respective fields; consequently, they are strongly inclined to resist interference by university authorities who are not members of their profession. Electives are considered unnecessary not only because they cost more but also because it is generally agreed that there exists a body of well-conceived professional knowledge which should be mastered by all students. In the mid-1950's, however, a trend towards offering general education in the first year or two, followed later by intensive specialization began in the University of Cartagena, the University of Santander, and the University of Los Andes. This has since spread to a number of other important institutions.

#### Historical Background

Colombian higher education has a long tradition. In 1580 the Papal Bull of Gregory XIII approved the founding of the Thomistic University under the sponsorship of the Dominicans. It had the same rights and privileges as those at Salamanca and Alcalá de Henares in Spain and could grant the degrees of bachiller, licenciado, magister, and doctor. This was followed by the establishment of the Javeriana University of the Company of Jesus in 1622, the Colegio Mayor del Rosario in 1653, and the Franciscan Colegio Mayor de San Buenaventura circa 1715. These institutions taught divine knowledge (theology and canon law) and human knowledge (philosophy, arts, jurisprudence, literature, and sometimes medicine). They carried the tradition of scholasticism to the New World in an evangelical spirit. Their main function was the training of the clergy and state officials.

The expulsion of the Jesuits by Carlos III in 1767 forced the closing of the Javerina University and was a blow to higher education in the country. The Colegio Mayor del Rosario, however, then emerged as a center for early scientific interests -- particularly the Botanical Expedition and the later Astronomical Observatory. Many leaders of the Independence movement were its graduates.

After Independence, some of the early nineteenth century colegios were converted to universities by Vice-President Santander. These institutions formed the nucleus of the present official departmental universities -- particularly in Antioquia, Cartagena, Cauca, and Bogota. Later, Law 66 of 1867 created a national university in Bogota.

These newer universities marked a departure from the older, strictly, ecclesiastical tradition. Their emphasis, inspired by the French Revolution, was now more secular. Even their structure was similar to the universities of France. Law, literature, medicine, and (to a lesser extent) science and engineering were the basic courses. Moreover, the state asserted more direct influence, including expropriation of many institutions belonging to the Catholic Church. The Externado de Colombia, which for many years distinguished itself in law, became in 1886 the first non-religious private institution.<sup>2</sup>

The founding of new public universities gained impetus in the twentieth century. Some of those established include the Universities of Nariño (1903), Atlántico (1941), Caldas (1943), Valle (1945), and the Escuela Naval de Cadetes (1931). Major private institutions were the

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<sup>2</sup>Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, La Educación Universitaria en Colombia, Bogota: Fondo Universitario Nacional, 1967, pp. 1-2.

Free University (1923), Javeriana University (restored in 1932), and the Pontifica Bolivariana University (1936).

Many new institutions followed World War II, among them the Industrial University of Santander (1947), the Universities of Los Andes (1949), and Medellin (1950), the National Pedagogical University (1951), La Gran Colombia University (1951), the Pedagogical and Technological University (founded in 1952 with roots in the normal school established in Tunja in 1871), and the University of Tolima (1955).

The Technological University of Santander introduced practical technical careers, and its high academic standards today make it one of the best schools in its field. The private University of Los Andes is notable both for its high quality programs and for its use of some of the newer teaching methods currently employed in the United States and Europe. Some private institutions (notably the La Gran Colombia University) have sought to make higher education accessible to the masses by introducing night classes for those who work during the day.<sup>3</sup>

At the end of the 18th century, there were three institutions of higher learning in Colombia; a century later there were still only six. By 1946 there were 14, with an enrollment of 7,337 students. By 1957 there were about 30, not including religious seminaries and military schools, enrolling a total of more than 15,000 students. Nine years later there were 64 universities, although the majority had very few students.<sup>4</sup> Enrollment increased 997 percent between 1938 and 1962.<sup>5</sup> Needless to

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 3-5.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>5</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 151.

say, the recent history of Colombian higher education is one of rapid expansion.

### Organization

A distinctive feature of Colombian higher education is that it functions on two levels. These levels were identified by Decree 1297 of 1964 as university and non-university higher education. Only the university level may offer degrees, and the Ministry of Education is in charge of non-university higher education.

Non-university higher education functions on an intermediate level and offers two diplomas -- *técnico* (three years) and experto (two years). Students receiving these diplomas may later transfer to the university. Non-universities are advised by the National University Fund but are supervised by the Higher Education Section of the Ministry of Education. Their standards are usually at a somewhat lower level than those of full status universities. Some 40 careers are offered in the non-university programs, while there are approximately 50 available in the universities.<sup>6</sup> In addition, the universities offer a few post-graduate programs.

### National University Fund (Fondo Universitario Nacional)

In 1954 the National University Fund was created as a decentralized public body. Its aim was to coordinate university efforts, especially in securing specialized faculty and organizing post-graduate programs.

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<sup>6</sup>Arango, op. cit., p. 24.

In 1957 the rectors of 23 universities formed the Colombian Association of Universities, a private organization which hoped to improve higher education. Its objectives are as follows:<sup>7</sup>

1. University autonomy and freedom of teaching in research,
2. Higher levels of academic and professional work,
3. A greater sense of university responsibility for the national interest and for democratic institutional practices,
4. A closer relationship between the university and the analysis and solution of national and regional problems,
5. An interchange of faculty,
6. A sharing of facilities, based on appropriate agreements,
7. Financial responsibility in the conduct of university affairs,
8. A search for greater financial support from public and private sources,
9. A better standard of living for professors and students,
10. The organization and encouragement of publishing activities, particularly of textbooks and teaching materials.
11. The dissemination of the fruits of science and learning.

Reorganization. The National University Fund was reorganized in 1958 so that its activities could be coordinated with those of the Colombian Association of Universities. Under its new status enacted in 1961, it is financed by the national government and by departments and municipalities interested in higher education. This support is based on one percent of the Ministry of Education budget and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  percent of the national support granted to affiliated public and private institutions, but not to exceed 300,000 pesos per university. In addition, the Fund receives not less than 10 percent of the Ministry of Education budget

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<sup>7</sup>Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, La Educación . . . , op. cit., p. 5-6.

allotted for the support of departmental universities and not less than 2 percent of the budget designated for private universities.<sup>8</sup>

The new purposes which have emerged from the reorganization of the Fund are as follows:<sup>9</sup>

1. An increased involvement of universities in the study of national problems,
2. Sponsorship of specialized studies,
3. The conduct of scholarly seminars,
4. Sponsorship of publications,
5. Promotion of programs of student and faculty welfare,
6. Service as a specialized agency of the government in inspection and supervision of university activities and programs (1964 Decree),
7. Distribution of national funds to public regional universities and private institutions.

The administration of the new organization includes the following:

1. A National Council of Rectors representing those universities legally approved and affiliated with the Colombian Association of Universities,
2. A six-member administrative committee,
3. A director named by the Council of Rectors.

Decree 1464 of 1963 authorized 25 specific institutions as universities. Others may use the name university, but they are not authorized

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<sup>8</sup> Pan American Union, op. cit., p. 12 and Augusto Franco A., "Una Experiencia Nacional: La Asociación Colombiana de Universidades y el Planeamiento de la Educación Universitaria en Colombia," in Pan American Union, Corrientes de la Educación Superior en América, Washington: Departamento de Asuntos Educativos, 1966, p. 21.

<sup>9</sup> Augusto Franco A., "Una Experiencia Nacional -- la Asociación Colombiana de Universidades y el Planeamiento de la Educación Universitaria en Colombia," Crónica Universitaria, Nr. 5, pp. 13-15, 1967. (similar to preceding work).

to award university degrees, although lesser titles, such as técnico superior and diploma de perito, may be granted. In addition, seven other universities have parts of their program recognized by law.

Achievements. A number of important accomplishments have been claimed by the National University Fund in association with the Colombian Association of Universities. These include the following:<sup>10</sup>

1. Cooperation among universities. University rectors now know one another better. Consequently, some private universities which had been organized for profit became non-profit institutions.
2. Increased enrollments. The number of students has grown from 15,000 in 1957 to nearly 50,000 in 1967.
3. Academic planning. Although this is still insufficient, more than 55 national seminars have been conducted with deans and specialists in science, humanities, and the professions. They have provided invaluable orientation, and their results have been published. In addition, permanent committees have been established for various careers and disciplines.
4. Quality of program. Quality and efficiency have been improved in areas of interest to the National University Fund, particularly in institutional evaluation and admission practices. There has also been an increase in the number and percentage of full-time professors -- from 790 in 1957 to 2,555 in 1966. Admission procedures have been centralized in member institutions, and selection procedures have been made less capricious. Institutional evaluation is being performed more and more by distinguished specialists in subject matter fields, and their roles are gradually becoming advisory as well as punitive.
5. University reform. Many universities are beginning to effectively reorganize themselves. They have moved from a variety of almost completely independent faculties to an effective sharing of resources and facilities. This has resulted in much more efficient program development, especially in science, research, and post-graduate study, and in simplified admissions procedures.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 15-17.

6. **Career diversification.** The number of careers that one can prepare for has more than doubled during the past ten years, with great increases in engineering, agriculture, and education enrollments. Traditional professions such as law and medicine have declined somewhat, while technical subjects have become more prominent. Well-structured short careers are still in the process of development, however, and the same is true of post-graduate instruction.
7. **Student welfare.** Considerable progress has been made in this area, where little had been done before. There are now better loan facilities, better medical and dental services, and more dormitory and cafeteria facilities. Other cooperative achievements include: two university theater festivals, five national choral contests, eight national championship matches in sports, and community action work involving many students.

University planning is considered to be of great importance, but the Colombian Association of Universities has sought to persuade rather than coerce in bringing about needed changes. Its encouragement has led to development planning offices in 17 universities and has recently produced a basic plan for higher education in collaboration with specialists from the University of California. In general, then, the Association, with the support of the National University Fund, has contributed significantly to the planned utilization of human and physical resources in higher education.<sup>11</sup>

Problems. Critics of the Association regard it as a privileged club. Many university-level entities which are functioning in Colombia are excluded from it, yet come under its supervision. In their first meeting in Bogota in 1964, these non-accredited institutions complained that they were excluded simply because they did not exist in 1957 when, without any legal definition as to what actually constituted a university,

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

the Association was formed. It is argued that many institutions founded since this date are excluded, even though they are as well-qualified as some of the present members. The 1964 meeting of non-Association members urged the establishment of standards which would serve to classify and define institutional status and eligibility for membership.<sup>12</sup>

This situation highlights several problems. For example, sound accreditation procedures are impossible without a clear definition of a university, yet without one several institutions have been denied membership in the Association. In addition, there exist no really adequate procedures to carry out effective coordination and inspection of higher education. Then, too, a serious effort is needed to halt the proliferation of ill-equipped, poorly-staffed, so-called universities. A further complication is the reluctance on the part of Catholic universities to collaborate in the development of a set of accreditation criteria because they are afraid that some of their member institutions would not meet even minimum standards. Indeed, the very existence of two agencies of accreditation -- the National University Fund and the Division of Higher and Normal Education of the Ministry of Education (which administers non-university higher education) -- is an unnecessary and debilitating dichotomy.<sup>13</sup>

New universities may be created in a variety of ways -- by a law passed by the national Congress, by a decree law emanating from the office of the President and signed by all ministers, or by laws enacted by

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<sup>12</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 277.

<sup>13</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, La Educación . . ., op. cit., p. 18.

departmental assemblies. University officials are also expected to submit evidence of their institution's eligibility to the National University Fund or to the Ministry of Education. There is a great need for a national council to revamp this complex system. To further complicate matters, the law also requires that industrial, ecclesiastical, and political figures be represented on university councils. Such legislation, while appropriate theoretically, often means in practice that university leadership is vulnerable to political vagaries.

University Autonomy. Colombian universities have not enjoyed as much autonomy as their counterparts in other Latin American countries. Although there has been considerable freedom of teaching, the achievement of corporate identity and the right to be governed by its own legal bodies was not granted the National University until Law 68 of 1935. This legislation also opened the door to the construction of a modern and attractive university city.<sup>14</sup>

Efforts to achieve university autonomy were relatively weak until 1957, when the Association of Colombian Universities was founded with this particular purpose in mind. Autonomy in general had been restricted to freedom in classroom discussion. The political activism so common to other parts of Latin America has not been so highly developed in Colombia. Professors at the public universities are considered essentially employees of the government on national, departmental, or municipal levels, while the private universities, with a few exceptions, are sponsored by the Roman Catholic Church. Although freedom of teaching is guaranteed by the national Constitution, the President has the final authority in

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<sup>14</sup> Fals Borda, op. cit., p. 207.

public universities. In recent years this authority has been employed to suppress several extremist student demonstrations.

Decree Law 0277 of July, 1958, established university autonomy. Its intent was to free the university from political intervention and to bring professors and students into the principal policymaking body of the university. However, this body, known as the higher council (consejo superior), also includes the governor and the departmental secretary of education, both of whom are politically influential. Moreover, representatives of professional associations, as well as the former students who also sit on this council, are subject to the approval of the governor and his secretary of education.<sup>15</sup> Despite frequent complaints, a considerable spirit of liberality seems to prevail. This feeling was recently indicated when a mechanical engineer with a degree from Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow was accepted in 1967 as a faculty member at the National University.<sup>16</sup>

#### Financial Aspects

The total expense of higher education (based on information from 54 institutions) rose from 207,000,000 pesos in 1963 to 504,000,000 in 1966, an increase of 143 percent,<sup>17</sup> as compared with an enrollment increase of 43 percent during the same period. The average cost per

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<sup>15</sup> Legters, op. cit., p. 162.

<sup>16</sup> Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Boletín, Bogota: Secretaría, Nr. 1, September, 1967, p. 35.

<sup>17</sup> Not corrected for changing value of the peso.

student increased from 10,178 pesos in 1963 to 11,396 pesos in 1966, thus reflecting a qualitative improvement as well.<sup>18</sup>

National funds in support of higher education increased from 2.7 percent of the total budget in 1963 to 4.4 percent in 1966. Contributions from the departments did not increase as much, while municipal support remained about the same. Income for higher education in 1966 came from the following sources: the national government, 45.0 percent; departmental governments, 12.8 percent; and municipal governments, 4.0 percent. Income from other sources, such as tuition, donations, and returns on investments made up the other 38.2 percent.<sup>19</sup> The current distribution of the Ministry of Education budget for higher education is as follows: the National University, 15 percent; departmental universities (seccionales), 10 percent; and private universities, 2 percent. The Colombian Association of Universities recommends the following additional sources of support:<sup>20</sup>

1. Contributions (however small) to higher education budgets from national, departmental, and municipal governments,
2. The use of income-producing investments in support of universities (This is already being done in a few instances, and is being increasingly used.),
3. Contacts with public and private organizations to carry out technical and scientific research useful to the community,

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<sup>18</sup> Expressed in pesos of constant value. Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Antecedentes . . . , op. cit., pp. 32-33.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., pp. 47 and 33.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

4. A gradual increase in tuition to counteract the declining value of the peso,
5. The organization of a system requiring students who have finished their university studies and have obtained work to repay some of the money they have received during their education,
6. The utilization of financial assistance from national and international organizations whenever feasible,
7. Greater effort in seeking community support for university endeavors.

Loans (usually from foreign sources) have played an important role in the development of a number of universities. For example, the National University has received two loans from the Inter-American Development Bank totaling 8.8 million dollars. The money will be used to hire more full-time professors, establish new courses, and improve university facilities. The loan granted in 1964 established an institute of basic sciences and bought new equipment and facilities for engineering and sociology. The second loan, authorized in 1966, financed the construction of new buildings and/or improvements in 12 different faculties of the University. It also provided for the purchase of improved branch facilities in Manizales, Medellin, and Palmira.

A loan in 1966 of 5.3 million dollars was made to the University of Antioquia to help finance a 9.6 million-dollar project to construct a new university city on a plot of 48 hectares near Medellin. This includes an institute of general studies, departments of economics, education, and engineering, and a central library and laboratories. A loan of 500,000 dollars was granted to the University del Valle in 1965 for a similar purpose -- to help finance a new university city. Another loan of one million dollars was granted in the same year to the

University of Los Andes to improve its engineering faculty.<sup>21</sup>

Tuition and Student Loans. Tuition in official universities is computed on a sliding scale based on the income of the student's parents. At the National University, for example, tuition since 1962 has been based on taxable income, unless this income is less than 4 percent of the family's net worth, in which case the tuition is based on 4 percent of net worth. A family earning between 5,000 and 7,000 pesos per month would pay 250 pesos per year per student; a family earning more than 28,000 pesos would pay no more than 1,500 per student.<sup>22</sup> This procedure has been criticized on the grounds that although families with students in higher education as a class possess greater ability to pay than does the rest of the population, they in fact pay a much smaller proportion of the total cost of their education than do parents of secondary students.

In most private universities, tuition is the same for all students, although it may vary from one faculty to another within the same institution. Charges range from 750 to 15,000 pesos. In response to an initiative by ICETEX, 11 of Colombia's 30 banks have extended credit at a nominal interest of 2 percent to students for tuition, living expenses, and books. Although this aid has virtually disappeared in recent years, banks authorized 6,931 such loans between January, 1964, and June, 1966. In addition, ICETEX granted 2,774 similar loans from 17 special funds between 1961 and 1965.<sup>23</sup> A 1966 survey at the National University showed that 22.8 percent

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<sup>21</sup> Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo, Actividades, 1961-1966, (1966 Report), p. 33.

<sup>22</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., pp. 69-70.

<sup>23</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, La Educación . . . , op. cit., pp. 65 and 67.

of the students in the sample currently had a loan. Of these, 48.8 percent had a loan from ICETEX, 31.8 percent from a bank, 17.6 percent from another type of institution, and 1.2 percent from an individual.<sup>24</sup>

#### Enrollment Characteristics

Enrollment in Colombian higher education is larger than ever before. Since 1961 universities have grown at an average annual rate of about 13 percent; students have increased proportionately -- from 1.7 per thousand population in 1961 to 2.7 per thousand in 1966.<sup>25</sup> In that year, 51,720 students were enrolled in both university and non-university higher education. Of the total, there were 27,593 in official institutions and 22,617 in private institutions; 41,393 were in institutions affiliated with the Colombian Association of Universities.<sup>26</sup> The proportion of students in private institutions grew from 39.7 percent in 1960 to 45.0 in 1966.

There were only 58 women enrolled in all universities in 1935. By 1966, 24 percent of all students were women, but they were proportionately most numerous in private universities.<sup>27</sup> The increase in enrollments during

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<sup>24</sup> No reply was received from 0.6 percent. Humberto Rojas et al., Los Estudiantes de la Universidad Nacional, Bogota: Universidad Nacional, Facultad de Sociología, Informe Técnico, Nr. 7, 1966, p. 76.

<sup>25</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Antecedentes . . . , op. cit., p. 29.

<sup>26</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. VIII, op. cit., p. 143.

<sup>27</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Estadísticas . . . , op. cit., pp. 6 and 11-12.

the past generation has been accompanied by a general decline in the population of law graduates, coupled with a comparative rise in the number of students in the sciences, engineering, education, and agriculture; in the social sciences, a vast majority have concentrated in the fields of economics and industrial relations.<sup>28</sup> This diversification of university specialization represents a desirable trend.

Excluding post-graduate students or those taking courses for which only four years of secondary education are required for admission, the total enrollment in university education for 1966 is reduced to 49,930.

Enrollments by fields were as follows:<sup>29</sup>

<u>Field of Study</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>Field of Study</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>
Administration & Economics	6,282	Social Sciences	2,350
Agriculture & Related Fields	3,690	Law	5,178
Fine Arts	2,901	Education	5,163
Library Science	40	General Studies	1,932
Exact Sciences	1,182	Humanities	2,496
Health Sciences	6,575	Engineering and Related Fields	12,141

The size of Colombian universities varies considerably, but most of them are very small. A summary of these data for 1966 is as follows:

<sup>28</sup> Zschock, op. cit., p. 101.

<sup>29</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Estadísticas . . ., op. cit., p. 21.

Institutions of Higher Education by  
Size of Enrollment<sup>30</sup>

<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>Number of Institutions</u>	<u>Name of Institution</u>
6,000 to 9,000	1	National University
4,000 to 4,500	1	Javeriana University
3,000 to 4,000	1	University of Antioquia
2,000 to 3,000	3	Gran Colombia, Valle, and Bolivariana
1,000 to 1,600	7	Los Andes, Tadeo Lozano, América, Libre, Pedagógica y Tecnológica, Atlántico, Cartagena
800 to 1,000	4	Pedagógica Nacional, Industrial de Santander, Caldas, Exter- nado de Colombia
500 to 800	10	Cauca, Distrital, Nariño, Tecnológica de Pereira, Tolima, Medellin, Santiago de Cali, INCCA, Santo Tomás, Escuela de Administración, y Finanzas Instituto Tecnoló- gico
300 to 500	3	Colegio Mayor del Rosario, Instituto Politécnico Colombiano J. I. C., Escuela Militar de Cadetes
Less than 300	32	All others

Non-University Higher Education

In addition to the officially recognized universities, there are many specialized programs in higher education which are essentially post-secondary, in that either the first or the second cycle of secondary

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<sup>30</sup>Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, La Educación . . .,  
op. cit., p. 12. In 1968 enrollment ranged from about 13,000 students  
to fewer than 200.

education is required for admission. A reorganization which went into effect in 1961 gave the Division of Higher and Normal Education in the Ministry of Education the responsibility both for the preparation of secondary teachers and for the coordination of non-university institutions.<sup>31</sup>

The Ministry of Education encourages and coordinates all professional training which requires all or part of secondary education for admission (except for universities). Institutions under its supervision include: the higher schools of women's education and culture, the National School of Physical Education, the National School of Accounting, the higher technical institutes of business, the Industrial Normal School, the Industrial Technical Institute, the Rural Education Experimental Institute of Pamplona, the Higher Experimental School for the Education of Rural Women at Bogota, the Secondary and Professional Institute of Quibdó, and the agricultural normal schools.<sup>32</sup> Many of these institutions offer work of university quality.

In 1965, there were 878 students enrolled in a variety of programs affiliated with the National University Fund which rarely extended beyond the third year of study. These consisted of 148 students in fine arts, 100 in natural sciences, 255 in social sciences, 52 in humanities, 114 in engineering and related fields, and 209 in medical sciences.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Posada, op. cit., p. XXXIX.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., pp. XL-XLI.

<sup>33</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I., op. cit., p. 46.

Curriculum

Colombian university faculties are usually much more self-sufficient than the United States department or college. The typical department (facultad) hires its own professors to teach whatever courses in mathematics, foreign language, or sociology it may require in addition to its professional subjects. During the past few years, however, there has been a pronounced trend in a number of the important universities toward the system used in the United States. Basic introductory courses in general education which serve all or most university departments, as well as a variation of the United States credit system have both been introduced.

Courses of study range in length from one year (civil aviation) to six years (doctor of medicine). The length varies with each faculty. Four years of study, including the completion of a thesis, may lead to the doctorate, although in a number of fields five or six years are required. Many students finish the required years of course work without completing the final examinations and/or the thesis required for the degree. Of the more than 50 university careers, many have made their appearance gradually. For example, agronomy was introduced in 1911, veterinary medicine in 1920, pharmacy in 1927, dentistry in 1932, architecture and social work in 1936, chemistry and psychology in 1938, nursing in 1944, public health in 1947, economics in 1951, sociology in 1959, electronics in 1960, and public administration in 1961. Although sociology and economics have been received with some suspicion by faculties in more traditional subjects, these careers are becoming increasingly popular.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Fals Borda, op. cit., p. 192.

Degrees. Although the degree of doctor is the common university professional degree, others, such as licenciado, magister, profesional, and economista, may be conferred. A 1964 decree granted any officially recognized university regulated by the National University Fund the right to authorize the degrees of magister and doctor, as well as the licenciado and profesional degrees.<sup>35</sup> Of course, great differences in quality exist, but there is a general tendency to authorize the degree of profesional to those students whose program is from ten to twelve semesters long. The licenciado is usually awarded to those who take an eight-semester program, especially in teaching and the social sciences.

Colombian educators recognize the need to standardize the degrees conferred by the various universities so that it is clear what each represents.<sup>36</sup> Efforts at standardization have been successful among institutions preparing physicians and dentists due to the concern exercised by the respective professional associations; however, several other professions have been less successful at devising effective licensing procedures. One source of difficulty has been a prevailing notion that a university degree achieves the same guarantee of quality and responsibility that a license does. This has not always proved true.<sup>37</sup>

In 1968 there were 30 universities having the right to confer the degree of licenciado, magister, or doctor. There is general agreement,

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<sup>35</sup> ICETEX, op. cit., p. 61.

<sup>36</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, La Educación . . ., op. cit., p. 45.

<sup>37</sup> M. F. W. Pollack, Admission, Retention, and Articulation of Curricula in Colombian Higher Education, Bogota: University of California Advisory Mission, Colombian Higher Education Project, 1967, pp. 20-21.

however, that more short-degree courses are needed. Only 20.3 percent of the degrees granted in 1966 were for courses of less than four years duration, and most of these graduates were women. Their limited appeal lies in the fact that they usually confer less prestige.<sup>38</sup>

A unique aspect of Colombian university degrees is the pseudo-title, egresado. Only about 25 percent of the students who finish their course work for a degree complete their theses and/or the comprehensive examinations. In effect, this situation has resulted in a second degree, the egresado, which identifies those who have not complied with one or both of these requirements. Many universities make little distinction between the two in hiring professors. Students who complete all degree requirements for a doctorate are usually those who wish to pursue advanced study abroad. The legal degree is generally required for this.<sup>39</sup> Since no statutes exist for some professions, egresados may practice them without the corresponding degree.<sup>40</sup>

A percentage comparison of graduates and egresados between 1920 and 1962 shows that educational sciences had the largest number of graduates -- with 96.6 percent, as contrasted with 3.4 percent egresados. Social sciences, on the other hand, had the lowest proportion of graduates -- 46.5 percent.<sup>41</sup> In many important respects, however, egresados, even though not degree recipients, have completed the most essential elements of a degree program.

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<sup>38</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, La Educación... op. cit., p. 39.

<sup>39</sup> John M. Hunter, Emerging Colombia, Washington: Public Affairs Press, 1962, p. 55.

<sup>40</sup> ICETEX, op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 59.

By the post-independence period, lawyers and doctors of medicine had the highest social reputation. For access to good positions, the social prestige which the degree conferred seemed to be more important than the skills required. It is often said, "[in the] Latin American university, they don't teach knowledge or subject matter, but professions." There is some truth in this. Today this same kind of social prestige is also accorded an engineering degree or any foreign degree.<sup>42</sup>

Representative Professional Curricula. The traditional curriculum of the various professional schools provides few or no electives. All students take the same courses in the same semester sequence, except for the recently introduced variations of the United States credit and elective system already mentioned. In some universities, a few colleges or schools permit a considerable amount of flexibility, while others allow absolutely none. Smaller institutions are more likely to follow the traditional curriculum than larger ones. Samples of both traditional and recently revised professional curricula from representative institutions appear in Tables 10, 11, 12, and 13.

Post-graduate education in Colombia is a recent development. Post-graduate courses given by Colombian universities fall into two categories -- those which give the right to an academic degree, and those which accredit attendance at a course by means of a certificate. The Universities of Los Andes, Antioquia, Caldas, Cartagena, Cauca, Javeriana, the Pedagógica Nacional, and del Valle now offer dozens of graduate courses which lead to the degree of magister or doctor.

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<sup>42</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, La Educación . . ., op. cit., pp. 38-39.

TABLE 10

CURRICULUM OF THE COLLEGE OF LAW AND POLITICAL SCIENCE  
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBIA (BOGOTA)<sup>43</sup>

	Hours Weekly
<b>First Year</b>	
General Constitutional Law	3
Civil Law (General and Industrial)	5
Introduction to Law	3
Roman Law I	3
General Political Economy	3
General and American Sociology	3
Humanities	3
Languages (French)	3
Social Doctrines	1
Pro Seminar	3
<b>Second Year</b>	
Colombian Constitutional Law	3
Civil Law (Property)	4
General Penal Law	4
Labor Law (Industrial)	3
Public and American International Law	3
Roman Law II	3
Colombian Economy	3
Languages (French)	3
Pro Seminar	3
Legal Medicine	3
<b>Third Year</b>	
General Administrative Law	3
Civil Law (Obligations)	4
Colombian Penal Law-Special Part (Regulations I to X of Penal Code)	3
Labor Law (Group and Social Security)	3
Mines and Petroleum	3
Public Finance	3
Languages (In accordance with specialization)	2
Seminar	3

<sup>43</sup> Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Boletín, Bogota: Facultad de y Ciencias Políticas, 1964, pp. 14-15.

TABLE 10 (continued)

	Hours Weekly
<b>Fourth Year</b>	
Colombian Administrative Law	3
Civil Law (Contracts)	4
Civil Law (Family)	3
Colombian Penal Law - Special Part (Regulations XI to XVI of Penal Code)	3
General Commercial Law	4
General Civil Trial Law	4
Penal Trial Law	3
Cooperative Law (Semester)	3
Languages (See third year)	2
Seminar	3
<b>Fifth Year</b>	
Philosophy of Law	3
Civil Law (Estates)	4
Special Commercial Law	3
Private International Law	3
Probate Law	4
Special Civil Trial Law	4
Labor Trial Law	2
Commercial Law	3
Professional Ethics (Semester)	3
Languages (See third year)	2
Seminar (Forensic practice)	3

Seminars for 3rd, 4th, and 5th years will provide an opportunity for specialization in one of the following fields during the last three years: Public Law, Private Law, Penal Law, and Labor Law.

5th year Seminars are oriented towards Administrative, Civil, Penal, and Labor practice. A thesis is required for the doctorate.

TABLE 11

CIVIL ENGINEERING CURRICULUM  
 UNIVERSIDAD JAVERIANA, BOGOTA<sup>44</sup>  
 (Sixteen Week Semesters)

	Hours Weekly		Hours Weekly
<b>Semester I</b>		<b>Semester II</b>	
Algebra	6	Differential Calculus	6
Geometry & Trigonometry	5	Analytic Geometry	5
Methodology	2	Physics I	6
Descriptive Geometry I	4	Descriptive Geometry II	4
Drawing I	4	Drawing II	4
English I (as needed)	5	English II	5
Religious Culture I	1	Religious Culture II	1
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<b>Semester III</b>		<b>Semester IV</b>	
Integral Calculus	6	Differential Equations	4
Vector Analysis	3	Physics III	6
Physics II	6	Mechanics I	6
Physical Chemistry	3	Hydraulics I	4
Topography I	6	Topography II	6
Spherical Trigonometry & Cosmography	3	Astronomy and Geodesy	4
Humanities I	3	Humanities II	3
Religious Culture III	1	Religious Culture IV	1
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		<b>Semester V</b>	
Special Mathematics for Engineers	4	Numerical Calculus	3
Mechanics II	4	Strength of Materials I	5
Hydraulics II	4	Roads I	6
Geology	4	Religious Culture V	1
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<sup>44</sup>Universidad Javeriana, Prospectus, Bogota: n. d., p. 14.

TABLE 11 (continued)

	Hours Weekly		Hours Weekly
<b>Semester VI</b>		<b>Semester VII</b>	
Electricity	5	Electro-technics I	5
Strength of Materials II	5	Structure Theory I	4
Hydrology	3	Mixtures	3
Sanitary Engineering I	5	Sanitary Engineering II	5
Roads II	3	Railroads and Airports	4
Soil Mechanics I	6	Soil Mechanics II	6
Statistics	3	Accounting	3
Religious Culture VI	1	Religious Culture VII	1
<hr/>			
<b>Semester VIII</b>		<b>Semester IX</b>	
Thermo-dynamics I	4	Thermo-dynamics II	4
Electro-technics II	4	Central Stations I	4
Structure Theory II	3	Construction	4
Concrete Structures I	5	Concrete Structures II	5
Sanitary Engineering III	5	Bridges I	4
Pavements	6	Hydraulic Structures	5
Economics	3	Legal Engineering	2
Religious Culture VIII	1	Religious Culture IX	1
<hr/>			
		<b>Semester X</b>	
Machinery	4	Central Stations II	5
Metal Structures	5	Bridges II	4
Hydraulic Structures II	5	Industrial Organization	2
Industrial Relations	2	Religious Culture X	1
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TABLE 12

CURRICULUM: COLLEGE OF MEDICINE  
 JAVERIANA UNIVERSITY, BOGOTA<sup>45</sup>  
 1966-1968

	Weekly Hours			Semester Hours Total	
	Theory	Practice	Total		
<b>First Year</b>					
<u>Cycle I - General Studies</u>					
<b>1st Semester</b>					
General Biology	2	2	4	70	
General Chemistry	3	3	6	104	
General Physics	3	4	7	122	
Mathematics	3	-	3	52	
English	5	-	5	87	
Medical Orientation	1	2	3	52	
	17	11	28	487	
<b>2nd Semester</b>					
General Biology	2	2	4	70	
General Chemistry	3	3	6	104	
General Physics	3	4	7	122	
Mathematics	3	-	3	52	
English	5	-	5	87	
Medical Orientation	1	2	3	52	
Religious Culture	2	-	2	34	
	19	11	30	521	
<b>Second Year</b>					
<u>Cycle II - Basic Medical Sciences</u>					
<b>3rd Semester</b>					
Anatomy	6	12	18	315	
Histology and Embryology	4	4	8	140	
Scientific Methodology	1	1	2	35	
Religious Culture	2	-	2	34	
	13	17	30	524	
<b>4th Semester</b>					
Physiology I	5	4	9	157	
Biochemistry	6	6	12	210	
Statistics	2	2	4	70	
General Psychology	3	-	3	52	
	16	12	28	489	

<sup>45</sup>Universidad Javeriana, Boletín, Bogota: Facultad de Medicina, 1966-1968, pp. 57-63.

TABLE 12 (continued)

	Weekly Hours			Semester Hours Total	
	Theory	Practice	Total		
<b><u>Third Year</u></b>					
<b><u>Cycle II - Basic Medical Sciences</u></b>					
<b>5th Semester</b>					
Physiology II	5	4	9	157	
Microbiology	6	10	16	280	
Pathology I	2	2	4	70	
	13	16	29	507	
<b>6th Semester</b>					
Pathology II	5	6	11	192	
Pharmacology	5	4	9	157	
Social Anthropology	1	1	2	35	
Medical Psychology	3	-	3	52	
Religious Culture	2	-	2	34	
	16	11	27	470	
<b><u>Fourth Year</u></b>					
<b><u>Cycle II - Clinical Sciences</u></b>					
<b>7th Semester - 1st Period</b>					
Medicine I, Semeiology	15	15	30	318	
Psychopathology	2	-	2	21	
Contemporary Image of Man	2	-	2	15	
Religious Culture	2	-	2	20	
	21	15	36	374	
<b>7th and 8th Semester - 2nd Period</b>					
Medicine I	10	20	30	450	
Psychopathology	2	-	2	30	
Contemporary Image of Man	2	-	2	30	
Religious Culture	2	-	2	15	
	16	20	36	525	
<b>8th Semester - 3rd Period</b>					
Pediatrics	5	25	30	450	
Psychopathology	2	-	2	30	
Contemporary Image of Man	2	-	2	25	
	9	25	34	505	

TABLE 12 (continued)

	Weekly Hours			Semester Hours Total	
	Theory	Practice	Total		
<b>Fifth Year</b>					
<b>Cycle III - Clinical Sciences</b>					
<b>9th Semester</b>					
Medicine II	-	30	30	615	
Legal Medicine	2	2	4	82	
Medical Anthropology	<u>2</u>	-	<u>2</u>	<u>35</u>	
	4	32	36	732	
<b>10th Semester</b>					
Preventive Medicine	9	25	34	340	
Psychiatry	9	25	34	340	
General Sociology I	2	-	2	35	
Medical Ethics I	<u>2</u>	-	<u>2</u>	<u>35</u>	
	13 [sic]	25 [sic]	38 [sic]	750	
<b>Sixth Year</b>					
<b>Cycle III - Clinical Sciences</b>					
<b>11th Semester</b>					
Surgery and Specializations	5	25	30	615	
General Sociology II	2	0	2	35	
Medical Ethics II	<u>2</u>	-	<u>2</u>	<u>35</u>	
	9	25	34	685	
<b>12th Semester</b>					
Gynecology and Obstetrics	5	25	30	615	
Medical Sociology	<u>2</u>	-	<u>2</u>	<u>35</u>	
	7	25	32	650	
<b>Seventh Year</b>					
<b>Cycle IV - Rotating Internship</b>					
Internal Medicine	2	-	2 1/2 months		
Pediatrics	2	-	2 1/2 months		
Surgery and Specializations	2	-	2 1/2 months		
Gynecology - Obstetrics	2	-	2 1/2 months		
Emergency			2 months		
Optional			1 1/2 months		
Vocations			<u>1/2 month</u>		
			12 months		

TABLE 13

FACULTY OF ECONOMICS: SUGGESTED CURRICULUM  
UNIVERSITY OF LOS ANDES, BOTOTA, 1967<sup>46</sup>

	Credits
<b>First Semester</b>	
Principles of Economics	4
Fundamentals of Accounting	3
General Mathematics: Logic	4
Greek Culture	3
History of Colombia I	2
English (or elective)	3
<b>Second Semester</b>	
Fundamentals of Statistics	3
General Business Accounting	3
General Mathematics	4
Humanities Elective	3
History of Colombia II	2
English (or elective)	3
<b>Third Semester</b>	
Basic Microeconomics	3
Elements of Calculus	4
Introduction to Political Science	3
Socio-Humanistic Elective	3
Spanish I	3
English (or elective)	3
<b>Fourth Semester</b>	
Basic Microeconomics	4
Economics of Engineering	3
Introduction to Anthropology or Social Psychology I	2
Socio-Humanistic Elective	2
Spanish II	3
English (or elective)	3
<b>Fifth Semester</b>	
Digital Programming	2
Applied Quantitative Analysis	4
Structure of the Economy	2
Intermediate Microeconomics	4
Money, Banking, and Monetary Theory	3
Elective	3

<sup>46</sup> Universidad de los Andes, Programa de Estudios, Facultad de Economía, 1967, pp. 23-24 and 27-28

TABLE 13 (continued)

	Credits
<b>Sixth Semester</b>	
Probability and Inference	4
Intermediate Microeconomics	4
Public Finance and Fiscal Policy	3
Theory of International Commerce	3
Principles of Economic Development	3
Elective	2
<b>Seventh Semester</b>	
Correlation and Regression	4
Comparative Economic History or Comparative Economic Systems	3
International Economic Policy	3
Theories of Economic Development	3
Political Economy or Colombian Political Economy	3
Elective	2
<b>Eighth Semester</b>	
Labor Economics	3
Economic Theories	3
Elements of Econometrics	4
Pre-Research Seminar	2
Electives	6

Those faculties with more than 20 students enrolled at the post-graduate level in 1964 were as follows:<sup>47</sup>

<u>University and Specialty</u>	<u>Degree</u>	<u>Length of Program</u>	<u>Number Enrolled</u>
Antioquia Public Health	Magister or Doctor	2 semesters and 6 semesters respectively	38
Surgery	Especializado	6 semesters	28
National Univ. Surgery	Especializado	6 semesters	73
Pediatrics	Especializado	6 semesters	21
Valle Business Admin.	Magister	3 semesters	36
Philosophy	Especializado	6 semesters	31
Surgery	Especializado	6 semesters	31
Internal Medicine	Especializado	6 semesters	20

Research. This function of higher education remains under-developed because of lack of personnel trained in research techniques and limited funds available to support such efforts. In recent years, however, some research funds have become available, particularly in support of economic development. Research efforts are most prominent at the National University, the University del Valle, the Industrial University of Santander, and the Universities of Antioquia and Los Andes. Their major work is in the areas of health and nutrition, agricultural resources, economics and sociology, architecture and construction, technology, literature and history, and market and

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<sup>47</sup>Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I. op. cit., pp. 50-51.

technical research. In addition, the National University and the University del Valle together produced nearly one hundred publications, including books and monographs.<sup>48</sup>

Specialized Institutes. Some of the most important research efforts have been conducted by autonomous institutes with very few ties to universities. These include the National Apprenticeship Service (SENA), the Colombian Institute of Anthropology, the Institute of Technological Research, the Bank of the Republic, the Colombo-American Linguistic Institute, the Caro y Cuervo Institute, and the Higher School of Public Administration.

The following examples illustrate the work of some of these institutes:<sup>49</sup>

The Inter-American Center for Housing and Planning (Centro Interamericano de Vivienda y Planeamiento) (CINVA). Founded in 1952, it is administered by the Organization of American States with the collaboration of various government agencies for professionals from various member nations. Its nine-month course in housing provided training for 346 specialists between 1952 and 1965, of which 78 were Colombians. It also offers shorter and less extensive programs of self-construction, rural housing, and related programs.

The Higher School of Public Administration (ESAP). Organized as an autonomous, university-level institute in 1958, its main purpose is to train public administrators. In addition to its regular courses, it has offered since 1963 the magister in Public Administration and since 1965 the magister in Development Administration (Planning). Each of these courses is of two years duration. There were 39 egresados in the advanced public administration course in 1965. This program

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<sup>48</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, La Educación . . ., op. cit., pp. 73 and 77.

<sup>49</sup> ICETEX, op. cit., pp. 71 and 73 and SENA, La Formación . . ., op. cit., p. 14.

is subsidized by a one-half of one percent tax on the payroll of public employees.

Caro y Cuervo Institute (Seminario Andrés Bello). Distinguished throughout Latin America, it offers a one-year graduate course preparing specialists in Latin American philology and linguistics. Of the 411 egresados between 1958 and 1965, 250 were Colombians.

The Colombo-American Linguistic Institute (ILCA). Created in 1962, it provides six-month and one-year graduate courses in Bogota and other cities in English language proficiency. In 1965, 665 specialists were enrolled.

University Extension. University extension takes four forms -- professional courses, general education courses, technical assistance services, and community action programs. The extension program is a very recent development in Colombian education. The National University in 1966 offered 73 courses in agriculture, fine arts, law, education, and engineering, and students had to register in the university to take them. At the University del Valle, 37 courses were offered in education, medicine, humanities, and engineering. The length of these courses varied from two to fourteen weeks. The Pontífica Bolivariana University conducted 12 courses in architecture and engineering and six other universities offered similar programs. A response from 14 universities offering extension course work indicated that about 54 percent of these programs were in engineering, 10 percent in medicine, and 9 percent in education. Ninety-eight percent of the courses were given during the day to a total of 1,615 persons; the average course length was 12 weeks.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Extensión Universitaria y Otros Servicios a la Comunidad, Bogota: 1967, p. 2.

For the most part, the Colombian university still has not taken a very active interest in community problems. Students leave the university and join their professional alumni group without much interest in employing their knowledge for the benefit of the general public. There are some noteworthy exceptions. For example, a 1962 decree required medical students to work in assigned villages around the country for two years. Similarly, a program sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation at the University del Valle Medical School has as one of its main goals (aside from teaching good medicine) teaching the student something about his own country so that he will be aware of the special environmental problems he will confront in his medical practice. Each freshman student is assigned to a family in one of the poorer sections of Cali. He begins with a socio-economic study of the family. By the end of his fourth year, he is able to function effectively as their family physician. When he graduates, he serves for several months in a rural health center near Cali, where he treats patients and helps do research in preventive medicine and public health.<sup>51</sup>

#### Instruction and Procedures

University teaching emphasizes three things -- theory, long hours of class, and memorization of information. The student's attitude, therefore, inclines toward passive learning rather than creative or critical thinking. He tends to regard his studies largely as an obstacle course which leads to eventual graduation.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Holt, op. cit., p. 169.

<sup>52</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, La Educación . . ., op. cit., pp. 36-37.

Students are accustomed to learning more from the professor's lecture than from textbooks. Professors expect the students to work hard, and long hours in class and compulsory attendance are ways of assuring that they do so. Consequently, 84.3 percent of the students at the National University had no outside employment, in spite of the fact that a majority of the students had limited financial resources.<sup>53</sup>

Class schedules requiring 38 hours of attendance weekly are not unusual. In fact, in one university, third-year students were required to attend class for 36 hours per week.<sup>54</sup> During the second semester of 1966 at the National University, 43.2 percent of the students attended classes for 30 or more hours weekly; another 45.7 percent were in class between 20 and 29 hours per week. Only 1.5 percent of those taking courses were enrolled in fewer than 10 hours of class weekly.<sup>55</sup> As a result, many students are continually listening to lectures, and of necessity doing little independent study or preparation for classes.

Not only are heavy class schedules traditional in secondary and higher education, but it is also felt by the majority of educators that the public would lack confidence in schooling which demanded less. Another argument frequently cited in support of so much classwork is that since libraries are generally inadequate and books so expensive,

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<sup>53</sup>Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Censo de Estudiantes, op. cit., p. 62. Of the students' parents, 56.3 percent had a montly income of less than 2,100 pesos (\$129.00 U.S.). Ibid., p. 76.

<sup>54</sup>Hunter, op. cit., p. 57.

<sup>55</sup>Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Censo de Estudiantes, op. cit., p. 48.

it is unreasonable to expect students to do much outside the classroom. Recent changes in a number of university and secondary programs, however, have not only moved in the direction of fewer formal classes, but have also allocated more money for library resources, as well as improvement in faculty salaries.

Another common feature of university life is that students in the same faculty generally attend classes together nearly all day. A two-hour lunch break is typical. Once the student is enrolled in a faculty, the vertical orientation of the curriculum seldom allows him to shop around and sample other fields outside his specialty. In many of the advanced courses, class enrollment is often as few as five or ten students. Of course, this is due partly to small entering classes, but more frequently it reflects the high rate of dropout. Many faculties operate with too few students to offer any electives, although steps have been taken recently by a number of universities to correct this situation.

Students usually study from textbooks and lecture notes. University libraries are generally decentralized and/or confined to a particular specialized subject. Textbooks in technical and scientific areas are usually translations of foreign sources, and many are used in the original English. In economics, for example, a great many of the textbook materials deal with United States or European conditions, and tend, therefore, to be largely irrelevant to Colombian circumstances. These conditions, however, are gradually being improved.

Until quite recently university libraries were considered relatively unimportant, since it was assumed that the students learned everything either from their lectures, from mimeographed notes, or from

some well-known handbook. In a few institutions this situation has changed as a result of some improvement in library facilities. Bibliographies and books, however, are still difficult to acquire and remain relatively inaccessible to many students. In addition, librarians in all but a few institutions are very poorly trained. A study of ten leading Colombian universities showed an average library collection of 6.6 books per student enrolled.<sup>56</sup>

Promotion and Failure. Policies differ from one university and even from one faculty to another, but the typical procedure requires the student to pass all of his subjects in order to advance to the next year's work. If he does not, he is dismissed, although in some faculties he may repeat the entire year's work. The only exception occurs when a certain course is considered unimportant. There is, however, a provision for makeup examinations. A survey of regular students at the National University (excluding newly-enrolled undergraduates) showed that 40.4 percent had never failed a subject at the university; however, 33.1 percent had failed three or more courses. In fact, nearly one-third of the latter group had failed eight or more courses.<sup>57</sup>

Provision for transfer from one university to another exists only when the National University Fund approves and if the applicant also entered his previous university with a secondary diploma of bachiller

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<sup>56</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, La Educación . . ., op. cit., pp. 54-55.

<sup>57</sup> Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Censo de Estudiantes, op. cit., p. 42.

or equivalent preparation for secondary teaching. Transfer is extremely difficult, however, and therefore relatively rare. For example, a law student, upon completion of his first year, cannot ordinarily transfer courses earned to an economics faculty, even in the same university, because none of the courses taught in the law faculty are acceptable in the first-year curriculum of economics. Moreover, if he wants to transfer to a law faculty in another Colombian university, he will find that the courses he has completed may or may not be a part of the first-year curriculum at the new university. Rather than start again, most students in this situation simply drop out. There does exist, however, some modest provision for a student to take special examinations to demonstrate proficiency attained in another department.<sup>58</sup>

#### Student Personnel

Admissions. University admissions are usually based on tests of knowledge and aptitude. Secondary grades, teachers' recommendations, personality tests, and personal interviews are also sometimes used. Standards vary considerably from one institution to another but very efficient admissions offices are now functioning in the larger universities. A report of the Colombian Association of Universities points out that requests for admission are approximately double the available space. The number of applications is misleading, however, due to the fact that students apply for admission to more than one faculty. Of

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<sup>58</sup> Pollack, op. cit., p. 12.

10,146 students examined for admission to the National University in 1967, only about 28 percent were accepted. Of this figure, 91 percent had taken the traditional secondary bachillerato. Interestingly, nearly 38 percent had no relatives who had ever graduated from a university, and over 54 percent came from families with six or more children.<sup>59</sup>

The Colombian Association of Universities has sponsored programs of professional guidance to improve university placement. These consist of psychological and general ability tests and personal interviews. The Ministry of Education has also published guides for secondary school graduates who plan to enter the university.

Students. Students on the university level generally come from upper- and middle-class families. However, the secondary schools from which they come tend to represent particular social classes. In private secondary schools, there are usually more upper-class students, but in public schools middle- and even lower-class students predominate. A survey conducted by Williamson found that nearly 11 percent of university students came from families of limited means -- unemployed parents, farmers with an income of about 60 dollars monthly, or unskilled or semi-skilled workers with even lower incomes. This study, while based largely on data from National University students, suggests

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<sup>59</sup> Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Censo de Aspirantes a Ingreso, Primer Semestre, 1967, Bogota: Oficina de Planeación de la Rectoría, Vol. I, 1967, pp. 8, 23, 28 and 15. In the National University School of Medicine in 1963, only 2 percent of the applicants passed the entrance requirements. Eighteen students were admitted, leaving 92 vacancies. Fifty students were admitted to the College of Engineering, leaving 155 vacancies. El Tiempo, Bogota, January 30, 1964 and February 17, 1964 and cited in Timothy F. Harding, The University, Politics and Development in Contemporary Latin America, Riverside: University of California, Research Seminar Series Nr. 3, June, 1968, p. 8.

significant differences in the social clientele of various institutions, as shown below:

**Social Class of Students in Selected Universities<sup>60</sup>**

<u>Number of Students Surveyed</u>	<u>National Number=610</u>	<u>Los Andes Number=42</u>	<u>Javeriana Number=54</u>	<u>Libre Number=63</u>
Upper-Class	6.7%	17.5%	35.8%	None
Upper-Middle-Class	7.6	32.5	20.8	1.7
Middle-Class	80.3	47.5	37.7	73.3
Lower- or Lower-Middle Class	5.4	2.5	1.9	25.0

In 1966 the median male student at the National University was 21 years old, while the median female was about 19 1/2. This difference may be accounted for by military conscription. Only 3.6 percent of all students were 28 years of age or older, while 21.7 percent of the women were 18 or younger.<sup>61</sup> In general, students at the National University are receiving more education than did their older brothers or other members of their family. This suggests that they represent an upwardly mobile sector of society.

Services. Twelve of Colombia's universities provide living facilities for some of their students. In Bogota 23.4 percent of the student body lived in university residences in 1964. Also, the National University Fund provides student and faculty drug service, making drugs

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<sup>60</sup> Robert C. Williamson, El Estudiante Colombiano y sus Actitudes, Bogota: Universidad Nacional, Monografías Sociológicas, Nr. 13, 1962, pp. 65-66. The Javeriana percentages total only 96.2 percent.

<sup>61</sup> Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Censo de Estudiantes, op. cit., p. 12.

available at a 40 percent discount. In addition, the National University provides medical and dental service. Books and reference works are available at discounts of up to 25 percent. Moreover, the best student in each college receives free tuition, and others with high averages receive tuition reductions. The most able student is offered a foreign study grant.<sup>62</sup>

All universities have a number of political and academic associations (often organized by the students themselves), and almost all have theater and choral groups. In 1966 the first university theatre festival was held, with 21 universities participating. The scope of physical education and athletics is limited but growing. Peace Corps teachers have provided a stimulus to existing programs, both on the university and secondary level. At the National University, for example, approximately 2,500 students (one-fourth of the total enrollment) participated in some kind of physical sport every month.

#### Professors

The typical university professor is a highly capable and respected professional who accepted his position more for prestige than for money. He usually continues his private profession or employment, and because of the press of his other duties is inclined to neglect his responsibilities as a teacher. In social science departments, he has a tendency to become an encyclopedist -- a bookish eminence who

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<sup>62</sup>Bernal Escobar, op. cit., pp. 220-21.

impresses students, but who has little first-hand knowledge of the matters he discusses. In several universities, this emphasis has changed rapidly in favor of more empirical scholarship.<sup>63</sup>

A professor usually does no university-related research, nor does he produce any scholarly publications, unless these are the primary reasons for his appointment. He goes to the university only when he is to give his lectures, and is therefore rarely available to the students. Despite these circumstances, most of these taxi professors are dedicated to doing the best job possible within the limitations of the system.

Unfortunately, at the present time no uniform standards exist in the selection of university professors. Furthermore, there is a wide variety of titles used to designate the various teaching ranks, depending upon the university. A typical institution will have from three to five distinct ranks. Those most widely used are indicated below:

**Frequency of Professorial Rank Designations  
in Thirteen Universities<sup>64</sup>**

<u>Number of Universities Using Designation</u>	<u>Rank</u>
6	Professor
7	Profesor Titular
9	Asociado
2	Agregado
2	Ordinario

<sup>63</sup> Fals Borda, op. cit., p. 204.

<sup>64</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Estudio del Personal Docente y Administrativo. Bogota: 1966, p. 12.

<u>Number of Universities Using Designation</u>	<u>Rank</u>
7	Asistente
3	Auxiliar
1	Asociado (Asistente y Asociado)
1	Maestro Lector
1	Agregado (Santiago de Cali)
8	Instructor
1	Becario
1	Residente
1	Lector
2	Auxiliar de Cátedra
1	Ocasional

Many more titles exist. At the National University, for example, there are profesores especiales, instructores asociados, instructores asistentes, and expertos in addition to several already noted above.

A distinguishing feature of Colombian universities is the large percentage of part-time university teachers employed, as the following illustrates:

**University Professors, by Employment Category<sup>65</sup>**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Number of Professors</u>	<u>Full Time</u>		<u>Half Time</u>		<u>Hourly</u>	
		<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
1960	2,751	544	19.8	246	8.9	1,961	71.3
1965	7,302	2,341	32.1	776	10.6	4,185	57.3
1966	8,010	2,651	33.1	883	11.0	4,476	55.9

As indicated above, there has been a considerable increase in the percentage of full-time professors employed in the past few years; however, hourly instructors remain a preeminent factor in Colombian higher education. More practically, full-time professors cost much more because they are paid more than a token honorarium for their services.

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<sup>65</sup>Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Antecedentes . . . , op. cit., p. 30.

In addition to the categories used above, a further distinction must be made. **Full-time** (tiempo completo) means that in addition to his teaching responsibilities, the professor may teach in several institutions and also practice his profession. Another term, dedicación exclusiva, means that a professor cannot work elsewhere. Of the 1,491 faculty members listed in the major categories at the National University, for example, 654 were dedicación exclusiva, 222 were tiempo completo, 197 were half-time, and 418 were part-time.<sup>66</sup> One fact should be remembered however. The actual number of half-time professors listed may be exaggerated, since one professor may have been teaching in several institutions and therefore counted more than once.

The term **full-time** has an additional connotation in Colombian education. It does not have the traditional meaning of concentrating one's principal period of work on academic activities. A professorship is generally regarded more or less as an honorary degree by the one selected. It is frequently the high point of his career, and not the beginning of a period of dedicated service to a particular institution. In fact, it often becomes a stepping-stone to a high political, diplomatic, or administrative post. In the past, appointment to a professorship has often been made because of family affiliation rather than outstanding scholarly excellence.<sup>67</sup>

As in secondary education, the universities have their share of part-time, or taxi professors. Although they often fail to prepare their lectures adequately, they are not thought of as a handicap by

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<sup>66</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, La Educación . . . , op. cit., p. 69.

<sup>67</sup> E. Wight Bakke, "Students on the March: The Cases of Mexico and Colombia," Sociology of Education, 37: 217, Spring, 1964.

ambitious students seeking association with men who have influential contact in the world of practical affairs. These teachers are especially useful to students interested mainly in the status and opportunities which a degree can confer; they are less appreciated by students who seek to develop a high level of professional competence.

Faculty Qualifications. The academic preparation of university faculty members is indicated below:

Highest Degree Attained by Colombian University Professors<sup>68</sup>

<u>Type of Institution</u>	<u>Técnico or Experto</u>	<u>Licenciados</u>	<u>Engineer, Doctor or Professional</u>
Public	4.6%	13.4%	67.8%
Private	3.6	12.6	73.3
	<u>Magister or Masters</u>	<u>Ph.D.</u>	<u>No University Degree</u>
Public	7.7%	1.5%	5.0%
Private	5.4	1.6	3.5

The adequacy of professors in fulfilling their obligations was assessed by students in the Williamson survey. In the physical and natural sciences they were judged adequate by 53.0 percent of the students, by 70.1 percent in education, psychology, and sociology, and by 41.9 percent in law and economics.<sup>69</sup>

Salaries and Welfare. Salaries are considered by most professors to be supplements to other income. Efforts to reward particularly

<sup>68</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Estadísticas . . ., op. cit., p. 81. These data are based on returns from two-thirds of all faculty members.

<sup>69</sup> Williamson, op. cit., p. 49.

dedicated professors have been hampered by bureaucratic conceptions of the professorship, which stress formal preparation and years of service. In 1966 the salaries of full-time professors ranged from 2,500 to 7,000 pesos per month, while the rate for an hourly professor (catedrático) varied from 18 to 40 pesos per hour.<sup>70</sup> In none of the university regulations studied by the Colombian Association of Universities are social benefits clearly specified other than the statement that professors are entitled to the same benefits established by Colombian labor legislation so far as vacations, unemployment, retirement, medical services, and the like are concerned.

#### Special Problems

Student Retention. The highest rate of dropout occurs after the first or second year, and it is very high in all faculties except law, where the overall retention rate is good. In the last years of university study, the rate of withdrawal is markedly reduced, especially when compared to dropout rates in secondary schools.<sup>71</sup> Table 14 illustrates these tendencies for particular fields.

One of the principal reasons for the high dropout rates in higher education is the rigidity of the curriculum. The student who begins a five-year career should finish it completely, but he often lacks the resources to do so and withdraws with a sense of failure in his purpose. The percentage of students who reach their final year of university

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<sup>70</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, La Educación . . ., op. cit., p. 50. The exchange rate at the end of 1966 was 16.30 pesos to the dollar.

<sup>71</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 158.

TABLE 14  
ENROLLMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION BY COURSES - 1965<sup>72</sup>  
(By Course Years)

Groups of Specialists	Total	First		Second		Third		Fourth		Fifth		Sixth		Total by Sex	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Agriculture and Related Fields*	2,956	701	20	686	17	444	7	466	7	394	7	---	---	2,896	60
Fine Arts	121	...	33	--	29	--	28	--	31	--	--	--	--	--	121
Physical and Natural Sciences	3,259	801	239	517	207	460	146	390	133	309	49	8	--	2,485	774
Social Sciences	4,548	1,291	400	846	296	630	197	446	132	281	29	--	--	3,494	1,054
Law	5,052	1,211	273	826	213	747	167	683	134	687	111	--	--	4,154	898
Education	4,338	1,060	991	519	492	405	311	281	265	8	6	--	--	2,273	2,065
Humanities	1,221	196	261	145	166	111	137	107	93	5	--	--	--	564	657
Engineering & Related Fields	9,803	3,600	241	2,265	129	1,396	41	970	39	747	23	345	7	9,323	480
Medical Sciences	4,172	612	309	671	234	494	234	419	134	438	96	502	29	3,136	1,036
Others	1,500	1,149	349	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1,149	349
Total	36,970	10,621	3,116	6,475	1,783	4,687	1,270	3,762	968	2,869	321	855	36	29,474	7,496

\*207 students at the Technological Agricultural Institute at the University of Nariño are not included because they study under a credit system which does not permit classification.

\*\*Includes only institutions affiliated with the National University Fund,

<sup>72</sup>Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. 1, op. cit., p. 47.

by the following: theology, 87.0 percent; law, 81.6 percent; dentistry, 65.4 percent; economics, 47.8 percent; architecture, 35.0 percent; philosophy and letters 32.9 percent; and civil engineering, 28.0 percent.<sup>73</sup>

Several trends in higher education should soon mitigate this problem. For example, where the new credit system is in use, students may withdraw at any time with credits to their account, thus encouraging them to complete their studies at a later date. Another alternative is the employment of intermediate courses of two or three years duration, which can be completed with more limited financial resources. This would certify capability at a lower level of professional competence, so that students could use their intermediate-level preparation in auxiliary professional roles. At present these partially-qualified persons receive no official recognition for their study, and their skills are consequently being lost to society. Sponsorship of such intermediate-level programs by more universities would give them an attractive status.

Personality and ability testing are being increasingly employed in the larger universities. This is a means of diverting students from studies in which they are not likely to be successful. It is also a means of more careful selection. At the National University, student dropout rates in the faculty of medicine went down due to two very simple changes -- more careful admission procedures and a larger percentage of full-time faculty.<sup>74</sup>

Student Activism. Why are some university students politically active? Ambitious young people all over the world like to stand out as leaders among

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>74</sup> José Félix Patiño Restrepo, La Reforma de la Universidad Nacional, Bogota: Informe del Rector, Vol. II, 1966, p. 61.

their peers. In Colombia, however, as in other Latin American countries, patient, organized, systematic effort is less important than the heroic deed in a crisis which distinguishes the leader from the followers, and shows him to be a real man. There are special advantages to campus leadership. One may attract the attention of politicians, and this could be the prelude to a political career. For example, President Carlos Lleras Restrepo was among the delegates to the 1928 student congress.

Where a non-political civil service is not well-developed, political maneuvering is involved in almost any government job. Those who have developed sharp political skills have a better chance for survival. This is true not only in government, but in the professions as well, where a man who by his own machinations can get things done has a valuable asset. Hence, participation in student politics may be one of the most desirable practical experiences of an ambitious youth's university career. Universities often attract young men with political ambition. For this reason, university registration may become the most desirable route for entering political life.<sup>75</sup> Unfortunately, public universities have also inherited many of the defects of their parent governments. Administrators are frequently political appointees. Political changes often affect even the least important professor, who may lose his position if he holds an unpopular view different from that of his government.<sup>76</sup>

If a student does not agree with the governing elite and does not have personal influence among them, then his chief hope of action has been

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<sup>75</sup> Robert H. Dix, Colombia: The Political Dimensions of Change, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967, pp. 345 and 203.

<sup>76</sup> Hunter, op. cit., p. 69.

to promote a confrontation with the decision-makers by means of a public demonstration. What most student demonstrations have in common is a resistance to any set of circumstances where someone else has made a decision about a matter in which they believe they should have had a voice. A prominent Colombian professor, Jaime Sanín Echeverri, has said, "the university should not be like the state wants it to be; rather the state should be like the university wants it to be." On the other hand, the university has been greatly criticized for producing professionals who act from a spirit of selfish individualism.<sup>77</sup>

Students often receive attention from high authorities. Public officials have tended to see the university's autonomy as a useful symbol of their hands-off policy. One political asset university activists possess is their spark potential, which can convert a public demonstration into a political disaster if it turns against a political regime they dislike. Moreover, opportunities for the expression of student idealism are sometimes so limited, especially in public universities, that students find a satisfying outlet in demonstrations that are related to some social reform objective. In addition, many students are willing to participate in such demonstrations because the public expects students to be able to do something about obstacles to justice and human welfare. Students also express a sentimental identification with the underprivileged as part of their popular mythology. In general, no other minority group in the country has had such a liberal reputation.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Three letters to the editor in El Tiempo, January 27, 1968.

<sup>78</sup> Bakke, op. cit., pp. 214, 224, 226.

There is widespread agreement that until about 1964, student activism in Colombia was less highly developed than in many other Latin American countries, although as early as the 1920's the Federation of Colombian Students was granted the right to represent students before the education committees of Congress (a practice which has continued to this day).<sup>79</sup> Even the university reform law promulgated in 1935 was not a direct result of student pressure. What might have become a revolution was prevented by the capacity of the oligarchy to respond sufficiently to pressure to diminish its image of intransigence and inflexibility in the face of demands for reform.<sup>80</sup>

Colombian students have less representation in university government than any other Latin American country. Partly because of this, student political organizations have been less responsive to the mass of students, and correspondingly more easily manipulated by their leaders. This has resulted in a general lack of open and competitive student party structure, particularly in recent years. The present National Federation of University Students (FUN), founded in 1963, is reported to lack legitimacy among a large proportion of the students, and seems to be dominated by leftist leaders of Maoist or Castroite persuasion.<sup>81</sup>

To counteract the FUN, students from several universities founded the Confederation of University Students (CEU) in 1964, with the stated objective of promoting student interests without ulterior political aims. Their

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<sup>79</sup> Dix, op. cit., p. 347.

<sup>80</sup> Kenneth N. Walker, "A Comparison of the University Reform Movements in Argentina and Colombia," Comparative Education Review, 10:264 and 267, June, 1966.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., pp. 264, 267 and 269-70.

following, however, is not as great as that of FUN.<sup>82</sup> Apparently, Colombian students have been less ready to contest control by minority student groups for two reasons -- first, because of the ephemeral nature of previous student federations and second, because of the lack of sufficient student participation in university government. Colombia's regionalism seems to have contributed to the relative weakness of student activism in the past. Students so frequently attend a university in their provincial capital that the National University in Bogota may be less dominant than national universities in other countries. However, as enrollments grow, activism may continue to increase unless institutional changes forestall student dissatisfactions.

There is also some evidence which indicates that higher education in Colombia does not necessarily enhance democratic orientations. Walker found that among students at the National University, there is a decline in confidence in the democratic process, a decline which, interestingly enough, coincides with the class year in which students are most likely to drop out. His research also found that university education in general did not humanize through self-understanding. Among activist groups, leftist students were found to be the most hostile and the most alienated to the contemporary political scene.<sup>83</sup> A large number of students expressed dissatisfaction with all political parties, including left-wing liberals and Communists. About half favored the parties of the government coalition --

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<sup>82</sup> Dix, op. cit., p. 345.

<sup>83</sup> Kenneth N. Walker, "Political Socialization in Universities," in Seymour Martin Lipset and Aldo Solari, editors, Elites in Latin America, New York: Oxford University Press, 1967, pp. 413-15, 418, and 425-26.

official Liberals and Conservatives, and only 11 percent backed the Communists.<sup>84</sup> Not surprisingly, political activism is most pronounced among students in public universities.

Student activism is usually of two distinct types. The kind described above is directed toward reform of society at large. This is the type which attracts the greatest attention abroad -- the kind which results when students disagree with public policy or the activities of foreign interests. Yet a greater proportion of student demonstrations in Colombia and elsewhere in Latin America seem to be directed toward university authorities. On the campus, the student strike is considered a suitable means of solving academic problems and improving student welfare; it is less acceptable when it is designed to further political objectives or to increase the prestige of the university. Students, therefore, are likely to see the strike more as a means of improving the quality of their educational circumstances than as a political weapon.<sup>85</sup>

Some illustrations of this tendency may be cited. In 1960, the University of Atlántico was at a standstill for 77 days because of protest strikes against a rector who refused to resign. On another occasion, a major strike at the National University forced the resignation of Mario Laserna, its able rector. The strike began with complaints about professors in the School of Architecture and spread ultimately to all faculties, including those in Medellin and Palmira. In another instance, the University of Cartagena was interrupted for weeks over a dispute in assigning quarters to a fifth-year medical student.

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<sup>84</sup> Seymour Martin Lipset, "University Students and Politics in Under-developed Countries," Comparative Education Review, 10: 152, June, 1966.

<sup>85</sup> Bakke, op. cit., p. 223 and Williamson, op. cit., p. 19.

In August, 1963, students at the National University comandeered a number of public service buses and held them on the campus to protest increased student fares.

In June, 1964, the Minister of Education conceded the seriousness of student activism in Colombia and a committee of deans and professors promptly began to study the causes of student conflict. Its central conclusion was that there exists a need for constant, informal, sincere communication between various segments of the university community. It was felt that liaison committees, a student newspaper, radio, and the like would easily reduce the number of offensive slogans painted on university walls. Student welfare and activity programs would also be helpful.<sup>86</sup>

Activism has continued to cause difficulties. A student strike called by the FUN in May, 1965, caused such violence that the government declared a state of siege. In late October, 1966, a motorcade carrying John D. Rockefeller III and President Carlos Lleras Restrepo was stoned by 200 leftist students. The two men were on their way to dedicate a new laboratory of veterinary medicine at the National University. Contrary to the tradition of permissiveness which had prevailed previously, troops and tear gas were used to oust them from the dedication site. There were widespread indications of public approval of the President's action. The autonomy traditionally enjoyed by universities was abolished three days later on October 27, 1966.

The tradition of student activism took a new form in 1967. Troops took over the campus of the National University on June 14 after two days of

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<sup>86</sup> Daniel Henao Henao et al., "Estudios sobre Conflictos," Crónica Universitaria, Nr. 1, p. 21, 1964.

student rioting over increased bus fares. Some 1,500 soldiers and 40 tanks were used to restore order on the campus of 10,000 students; 577 rioters were arrested.

A number of important academic reforms have already been instituted at the National University which may reduce some of the causes of student dissatisfaction. With regard to its autonomy, the university has begun to seek funds from non-government sources to enhance future freedom of operation. At present, 98 percent of its funds comes from the government, although there are no specifications on how they may be spent (except for capital investment).

Utilization of University-Trained Personnel. The Colombian university regards its graduates as fully-trained professionals because they have received their preparation in relatively specialized fields. New knowledge and new skill requirements, however, often make specialized talents obsolete, suggesting the desirability of a more general type of professional preparation. This overemphasis on specialization is said to be a special problem in engineering and social sciences, where students need to be especially alert to technological and social change.<sup>87</sup>

There is also a tendency for many members of the elite classes to prepare for professions without any serious intentions of practicing them. The dimensions of this problem are suggested by the following:

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<sup>87</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Antecedentes . . ., op. cit., pp. 81-82 and 88.

Percentage of Professionals <sup>88</sup>  
Who Practice Their Profession

Profession	Active Practitioners	Profession	Active Practitioners
Physicians	91.3%	Agronomists	67.2%
Dentists	90.4	University Professors	63.7
Petroleum Engineers	89.8	Public Accountants	47.5
Geologists	86.2	Sociologists	37.4
Veterinarians	80.3	Lawyers	30.8
Architects	75.0	Mathematicians	29.6

In 1963, the University of Los Andes, the University of Antioquia, and the University del Valle initiated a program of "inter-faculty departmentalization" in order to reduce premature specialization and provide more broadly based educational experiences. A related concern is that of excessively long periods of professional training. At present there are about four professionals who have taken long careers to every one who has taken a short career. This relationship should be reversed if middle-level professionals are not to be supplanted by workers without adequate qualifications. Many individuals qualified to perform highly complex tasks are not at present being properly used, while many untrained middle-level workers are performing ineffectively. Universities have already become aware of this problem and are now either establishing short technical careers or expanding their offerings in these areas.

<sup>88</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., pp. 103-104.

Another characteristic of the university-trained professional is that he is not likely to serve in the locality where he is most needed. To illustrate this fact, 73.6 percent of professionals find employment in large urban areas. For example, about one-third of the nation's doctors and dentists practice in Bogota, which has only one-tenth of the nation's population. Another aspect of this difficulty is also shown in the medical and dental professions. In 1964 Colombia had 4.7 physicians for every 10,000 inhabitants, while Uruguay, Cuba, Spain, and Greece had more than double that proportion; the United States, Germany, and Israel had nearly four times this percentage. For dentists, the rate was 1.2 per 10,000 in Colombia, as compared to 3.8 in the United States. The method presently being used to increase the supply of doctors is to reduce the rate of dropout from medical schools by more efficient counseling and selection techniques. The need for expansion of short careers is further illustrated by the ratio of doctors to nurses. Although nursing education was begun in 1916, there is still only one qualified nurse for every five doctors.<sup>89</sup>

University Proliferation. Although Colombia already has more universities than any other country its size, new institutions are frequently being established. This over-expansion has caused a decline in the quality of some institutions, which makes it the principal problem of Colombian higher education. Thirty of the more than sixty post-secondary institutions are located in Bogota, and there is considerable duplication of effort. There are, for example, nine faculties of law, eleven of economics, and seven each of architecture, civil engineering, and education in the city. Many departments

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<sup>89</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Antecedentes . . ., op. cit., pp. 76-77 and 79.

and municipalities regard a new university as a symbol of local achievement, without considering what it takes to establish and adequately finance such an institution. A basic national plan is needed which can lead university development in more constructive directions.<sup>90</sup>

The Colombian Association of Universities has sought to create a national commission to coordinate university development, but the private universities, which are predominantly Catholic, object to the President's appointing of the governing commission on the grounds that the freedom of private institutions would be seriously compromised. The Church also objects to the suggestion of the National University Fund that geographical criteria be used to select the five outstanding nuclear universities. This would mean that a Catholic university would not be included. It is true that while there are many distinguished Catholic institutions, public institutions are more preeminent in each of the respective regions of the nation.

#### Criticisms and Reforms

Colombian university leaders have been the first to point out both the weaknesses of their present system and the steps needed to improve it. The National University Fund supports the work of the Colombian Association of Universities in gathering relevant data, holding conferences, and persuading the nation's institutions to collaborate more effectively. In addition, the Colombian Association of Faculties of Medicine has identified some of the more common deficiencies. They include the following:<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, La Educación . . ., op. cit., pp. 11 and 13.

<sup>91</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Facultades de Medicina, "Crises de la Universidad Colombiana," Crónica Universitaria, 1: 25-29, Nr. 1, August-September, 1964.

### I. Administration

- A. Weak university structure. Rectors, deans, and university committees are frequently changed and consequently inexperienced. They lack sufficient knowledge of university structure and complex academic problems, resulting in poor leadership, particularly in crisis situations.
- B. Ineffective communication between the administration, faculty, and students,
- C. Lines of responsibility are unknown or unclear, resulting in conflicts or neglect.

### II. Faculty

- A. University faculties are weak because only a relatively small percentage are dedicated to academic life. Their work as professors affords few opportunities for improvement. Their pay is so low they are forced to neglect their teaching and work elsewhere.
- B. As a result of the above circumstances, many discontented professors convey their feelings to their students.
- C. For similar reasons, some professors seek greater security and personal advantage by becoming leaders of student factions, which they use as a means of seeking promotions and rank.
- D. A lack of communication between students and administrators means that problems have grown out of all proportion to their significance by the time efforts are made to solve them. This communication lack is most acute in periods of crisis, while a false sense of faculty authority prevents discussions which might result in solutions. Frequently, in times of crisis, both administration and faculty make promises which are very difficult for them to keep.

### III. Students

- A. Students do not identify with the university. In fact, they frequently act against it in an aggressive and irresponsible manner.
- B. Although the majority of students may have the best of intentions, all too frequently they delegate their representation to small groups of student leaders and occasionally to non-university elements.

- C. Students seldom represent their own personal views; rather they act as a group, frequently irresponsibly.
- D. Given the youth of many students, there is a natural tendency to rebel against authority. Their demonstrations are often little more than part of the process of growing up, and this fact is insufficiently appreciated by the faculty and administration.
- E. Outside elements often commit acts of violence. When students are unjustly blamed, they react aggressively. The result is an irreconcilable division between students, faculty, and administration.

#### IV. Structural Aspects

The organizational structure of the university is notoriously weak for the following reasons:

- A. Lack of autonomy, if autonomy is defined as the capacity of the university to govern itself.
  - 1. This lack is due to inadequate financial support, which comes almost exclusively from the government. For this reason the government sometimes intervenes in university affairs, even to a greater degree than the law itself permits.
  - 2. Non-university bodies, such as industry, commerce, the church, and other important community forces are represented on the councils and administrative bodies of the university. While such representation enhances communication with the nation, it should not intervene in the academic management of the institution.
- B. There is a need to be concerned about the effort to maintain a balance of power between the administration and the students. This balance is almost impossible to maintain between relatively stable faculties and administrative groups and an essentially transient student body.
- C. Compared with other public projects, such as highways, irrigation works, etc., the university receives relatively little support as an agency which could hasten national development.
- D. Constructive forces in the community are weak and poorly organized, while the destructive forces are well-organized minorities often able to get their way.

## V. Non-University Influences

- A. Political parties frequently try to place politically prominent persons in university administrative positions. Usually these persons are unacquainted with university problems and lack the necessary scholarly outlook. The same effort is also made in filling less important positions.
- B. There is some evidence that Communists also capitalize on the Colombian universities' weaknesses in order to agitate for their cause.

Another difficulty has been that many advanced third and fourth year courses are characterized by low enrollments. In 1966, for example, five different faculties of engineering had an average fourth year enrollment of only 11 students in each of 5 specialties.<sup>92</sup>

The transient nature of the university president (rector) also poses special difficulties, for he is frequently in office for only two or three years; in some universities he is only part-time. Not only is long-range planning difficult under such circumstances, but the office is also more prone to student and faculty agitation. The post is usually subject to political vagaries, and unqualified rectors are sometimes appointed. In addition, the rectorship may be so limited in its power that the talents of able rectors are often wasted. Administrative channels are often inadequately defined, and sometimes there are not even enough personnel present to implement the decisions that are made.<sup>93</sup>

One positive change in recent years gives the technical bachillerato access to certain university careers which were once only open to graduates with a classical or general bachillerato. The creation of new institutes

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<sup>92</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, La Educación . . ., op. cit., pp. 27-29.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., pp. 22-23, and 25.

Middle education and a reformed secondary curriculum both seem likely to entice larger numbers of students, many of whom will choose intermediate university careers.<sup>94</sup> In addition, conferences of rectors in recent years have led to the following improvements: (1) the introduction of academic divisions of general studies, (2) the grouping of related disciplines in single departments or colleges, (3) the creation of shorter careers and programs for post-graduate study, and (4) a reevaluation of degree programs.

#### Representative Universities

Colombia has many distinguished institutions of higher education, not only in the national capital but in other cities, such as Medellin, Cali, Bucaramanga, and Tunja. In an effort to convey something of the institutional variety which exists, selected features of a few of the most prestigious institutions will be described below in somewhat greater detail.

The National University. The National University in Bogota is a product of law 66 of 1867. It has grown in stature through the years and in 1967 enrolled 9,984 students.

In the 1930's, President Alfonso López referred to the universities as "unrelated to Colombian problems and realities." In recognition of this situation, Congress approved Law 68 of 1935, which reorganized the various faculties of the National University, granted it corporate autonomy, and financed the construction of a modern campus in suburban Bogota. Its various colleges now include: fine arts, sciences, agricultural sciences, human sciences

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<sup>94</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 279.

(education, economics, business administration, philosophy and humanities, history, psychology, sociology and social work, anthropology, philology and languages, and geography), health sciences, engineering, law, mines, architecture, agronomy, and civil engineering at the Manizales campus. There are also branch campuses at Palmira and Medellin.

Unfortunately, the general spirit in these faculties is still not completely unified; some very small departments in closely related subjects still have their own dean, secretary, and other assistants. Each college or department may have its own professor of psychology or foreign languages to teach introductory courses, although all faculties now share the language and basic science staff. The department of physics may also ask the department of sociology to teach the introductory sociology course to physics students. Integration of departments at the National University has been most fully carried out in the science fields, health, and agriculture, but it is still very limited in faculties such as law.

The Higher University Council (Consejo Superior Universitario) is the highest organ of university government. It is composed of the following members:

The National Minister of Education, or his representative,

The Minister of the Treasury (Hacienda), or his representative,

The Dean, elected by the Academic Council,

A university professor, elected by the other professors,

A graduate of the university, who may be a professor, chosen by former students who are members of the governing boards of faculties or schools,

A representative of the Roman Catholic Church, designated by the Archdiocese of Bogota, who should be a professor at the university,

Two representatives of the students, one elected by the Student Assembly from among its members and the other chosen by student representatives on the governing boards of faculties or schools,

A representative of the national scholarly academies, chosen by the presidents of the respective academies,

The rector, who shall have a voice on the Higher University Council, which elects him.

The functions of the Council include: (1) electing a rector (principal administrative officer) for a three-year term, (2) electing deans of faculties and directors of schools and institutes for a period of two years, and (3) carrying out the regulations of the faculty, student organizations, and alumni, according to the laws which apply to the university. The Council is also responsible for confirming the appointments of teaching personnel.<sup>95</sup>

Several important changes have taken place in recent years. The 27 different faculties which were functioning in 1964 were reduced to 10 by 1967, while programs offered were increased from 32 to over 60. The reduction in costs resulting from less duplication of effort made additional construction less necessary. Surplus buildings have been converted into a central library, a museum of modern art, a museum of natural history, and a student center. There have been a number of other improvements as well.<sup>96</sup>

University of Los Andes. The University of Los Andes was founded in protest against Latin American traditions and political interference in higher education, which were such disruptive factors in other Colombian

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<sup>95</sup> Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Manual de Organización Docente, Bogota: Universidad Nacional, Oficina de Planeación, 1967, pp. 3-6.

<sup>96</sup> Patiño, op. cit., p. 36.

universities. Los Andes is distinctive as a private institution affiliated neither with church nor state.

Los Andes has long sought to emulate the more effective forms of educational organization typical of United States higher education and its program was originally designed to facilitate transfer to foreign institutions for advanced technical training. Its major departments, which enrolled 1,595 students in 1966, include architecture, arts and sciences, economics, philosophy and letters, and engineering, as well as schools of fine arts and a graduate school of economics. Research is represented by a center for studies of economic development, a center for planning, urbanism, and esthetic investigation, and an electronic computing center. Its department of anthropology is regarded as one of the best of its kind in Latin America, and its college of engineering is well-regarded for its effective instruction. It also offers post-graduate studies in engineering and microbiology.

A distinctive characteristic of Los Andes is its role in international exchanges. In 1966, groups from Illinois, California, Brandeis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Yale University visited the campus. Professional ties were established in several higher specialties in Holland, the United States, Germany, France, and Italy. In addition, Los Andes has cooperative undertakings with six other Colombian universities, including night classes and special courses for labor and business leaders.

Although Los Andes has received important grants from private foundations, a relatively high tuition charge covered about 58 percent of its total costs in 1966; in addition, 134 scholarships were awarded to impecunious students. Good facilities combined with high tuition charges make it an attractive

Institution for the talented sons and daughters of the well-to-do.<sup>97</sup> Like many other Colombian institutions of higher education, there are very stringent attendance rules. Students missing 10 percent of the classes during the first half of a given course will be suspended from the course. If a student misses 15 percent of his classes in the second half of the course, he is prohibited from taking his final examination.

One of the university's central problems is that donations have stimulated the development of programs which, when the assistance is withdrawn or used up, are frequently too costly to maintain. The university needs to reconsider its policy of accepting conditional gifts. In 1966, for example, the Ford Foundation gave 732,000 dollars to encourage a variety of programs, while Rockefeller contributed 100,000 dollars in the areas of biology and medicine. The university is represented in New York by the Los Andes Foundation.<sup>98</sup>

Javeriana University. Originally founded in 1622 and restored in 1932, the Jesuit-sponsored Javeriana University is the largest Catholic institution in the country, enrolling 4,121 students in 1966. It is also one of the most important universities in Bogota. Its major faculties are architecture, civil law, canon law, economics, education, nursing, philosophy and letters, civil engineering, electronic engineering, medicine, nutrition and dietetics, dentistry, and social sciences. It also has schools of bacteriology and communication sciences, as well as departments of arts, basic science, foreign languages, and microbiology. The University has its own 320-bed teaching hospital.

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<sup>97</sup> Ramón de Zubiria, Informe del Rector al Consejo Directivo de la Universidad de los Andes, Bogota: May 24, 1967, pp. 22-23.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

The Industrial University of Santander. Founded in 1947, the University had 914 students in 1966. It is located in Bucaramanga.

One of the most distinguished of Colombia's public technical institutions, the University has faculties of industrial, electrical, mechanical, petroleum, metallurgical, chemical, and civil engineering, as well as divisions of basic science, scientific research, health sciences, and humanities.

Other large institutions and their 1966 enrollments are: Public -- University of Antioquia, 3,476; University of Atlántico, 1,333; University del Valle, 1,798; Pedagogical and Technological University (Tunja), 1,092; University of Caldas, 977; University of Cartagena, 992; and the National Pedagogical University (Bogota), 927. Private -- La Gran Colombia University (Bogota), 3,049; the Pontífica Bolivariana University (Medellin), 1,981; University "Jorge Tadeo Lozano" (Bogota), 1,915; Free University of Colombia (Bogota/Barranquilla), 1,522; and University of America (Bogota), 1,226.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Estadísticas . . . , op. cit., pp. 6-19.

## CHAPTER 10

### TEACHERS AND THEIR PREPARATION

Since an educational system is no better than the teachers who serve in it, their preparation and performance are more indicative of the quality of education than any other single factor. This chapter concerns Colombia's elementary and secondary teachers -- their preparation, their working conditions, and their problems.

#### Qualifications of Teachers

Elementary Teachers. Elementary teachers are usually women, and in rural areas they are likely to possess very limited formal training, as Table 15 indicates.

Cereté, Córdova, offers a striking illustration of teacher qualifications in public rural elementary schools. Havens found that out of 52 teachers, two had only two years of elementary education, three had three years, three had four years, ten had five years and the remainder had some secondary or normal education, although only five actually graduated.<sup>1</sup> While these conditions are not universal for rural Colombia, urban teachers are generally much better prepared. The extent to which advancement in teacher training has taken place

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<sup>1</sup>Havens, op. cit., p. 7.

TABLE 15  
EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS, 1965<sup>2</sup>

Qualifications	Total No. of Teachers	With Secondary Education				With Higher Education			
		Academic		Technical		University		Pedagogical	
		With Primary Educ.	Without	With Diploma	Without	With Diploma	Without	With University	With Normal School
National Totals	63,250	5,123	5,650	13,966	2,705	1,214	635	617	975
Urban Public Schools	7,464	165	974	2,278	137	68	52	109	70
Men	20,794	632	1,129	3,622	725	263	36	40	175
Women	2,993	308	304	1,106	94	90	13	28	19
Rural Public Schools	18,196	3,747	674	4,761	772	421	18	39	72
Men	4,302	47	1,062	683	162	85	355	275	244
Women	8,912	171	1,444	1,386	778	280	211	112	386
Urban Private Schools	202	12	30	55	8	2	10	14	6
Men	387	41	33	75	29	5	-	-	3
Women									4
Rural Private Schools									151
									46
									13

<sup>2</sup>Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 80.

nationally is indicated by the fact that the percentage of elementary teachers without a secondary or higher diploma declined from 64 percent in 1957 to 46 percent in 1965.

In rural Aritama, Reichel Dolmatoff noted that elementary teachers were usually natives of the villages in which they taught. Their educational background typically consisted of two or three years of elementary schooling, followed occasionally by a short course at a so-called "commercial school." To qualify for a teaching post, personal qualities, such as social status, party affiliation and kinship were very important, completely overshadowing in importance the qualification of academic preparation. Every year there was considerable fear among teachers about reappointments because there was always the chance of being replaced by another teacher with better connections. As a matter of fact, teachers were changed frequently, not only because every change in politics or in the personnel in the departmental government influenced their positions, but also because there was a great deal of jealousy and friction among candidates. As a consequence, teachers there belonged to a local elite, and they enjoyed high social status. All teachers were members of prominent families and were very conscious of their "Spanish" ancestry. There was a general feeling that getting good schooling depended upon the supervision and guidance of women of upper-class background, although the custom caused considerable resentment.<sup>3</sup> One should not conclude that such conditions prevail in schools administered by the Ministry of National Education, although the example above typifies a national problem on the departmental level and helps to explain the widespread use of poorly-

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<sup>3</sup>Reichel Dolmatoff, op. cit., p. 117.

qualified elementary teachers, even when more capable individuals are available.

Secondary Teachers. As might be expected, secondary teachers have had somewhat more formal preparation, although about 19 percent of them lack diplomas from secondary or higher institutions of learning. Table 16 indicates the preparation they receive.

Accurate information on the number of secondary teachers is difficult to compile because many are teaching in a part-time capacity. In 1964 their hourly pay ranged from 8 to 15 pesos per hour, depending upon their qualifications. Part-time teachers sometimes are able to earn more than full-time teachers by working longer hours in several schools, although the quality of instruction may suffer under this practice. University students also often teach as a means of financing their studies. Of the 30,813 secondary teachers in service in 1965, 12,560 were employed in public institutions and 18,253 in private schools.

#### Teacher Preparation

Normal Schools. Law 2 of 1870 authorized the establishment of public elementary education and gave aid to support normal schools in the capitals of the various departments. Nine professors from Germany brought to Colombia in 1871 became the first directors of the state normal schools. Although Colombian counterparts were trained in their places, most of the Germans remained in Colombia for the rest of their lives. Despite frequent civil wars which have greatly weakened budgetary support for normal education, German pedagogical methods have continued to influence normal school procedures in Colombia.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Fals Borda, op. cit., p. 199.

TABLE 16  
EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION OF SECONDARY TEACHERS<sup>5</sup>  
(Educación Media) 1965

Areas of Specialization	Teachers	With Secondary Education				With Higher Education				Normal School			
		Academic		Technical		University		Pedagogical		University		Normal School	
		With Diploma	Without Diploma	With Diploma	Without Diploma	With Diploma	Without Diploma	With Diploma	Without Diploma	With Diploma	Without Diploma	With Diploma	Without Diploma
Bachillerato	19,527	4,954	1,359	851	269	3,138	1,423	2,281	494	4,062	696		
Industrial	1,563	340	103	468	77	230	45	83	12	166	39		
Commercial	4,134	1,124	282	858	113	478	202	241	53	665	118		
Normal	4,467	578	209	156	45	558	83	629	80	1,910	219		
Complementary	713	103	98	113	52	28	3	23	12	220	61		
Agricultural	409	65	27	117	14	45	3	31	10	91	6		
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,813</b>	<b>7,164</b>	<b>2,078</b>	<b>2,563</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>4,477</b>	<b>1,759</b>	<b>3,288</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>7,114</b>	<b>1,139</b>		

<sup>5</sup>Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 85.

Normal education is designed to prepare its graduates to teach elementary school. The latest reform, which has been in effect since 1963, standardized normal education. This now consists of one six-year cycle with a prerequisite of five years of elementary school. The new normal school curriculum includes only the last two years of secondary education because the first four years are essentially the same as those required for the classical bachiller program.

In 1965 there were 345 normal schools in Colombia -- 196 public and 149 private.<sup>6</sup> There were about twice as many public institutions administered by departmental governments as there were under the direct control of the Ministry of National Education. In the 196 public normal schools operating in 1965, 72.3 percent of the students were women, while in the 149 private institutions this figure rose to 93.3 percent. Over 98 percent of the public institutions were segregated by sex.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to meeting the requirement of five years of elementary schooling, candidates for admission to normal schools must take an admission test to determine their psychological fitness to teach. An interview may also be required. Moreover, confidential cumulative records must be kept on each student while he is in attendance.

Many normal schools are boarding institutions. About one-fourth of the students in the public schools receive full scholarships, while a somewhat smaller proportion in the private institutions are similarly aided. In 1965, however, only about 1,600 of the 5,000 normal school graduates actually taught. This was due partly to the fact that persons with lesser

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<sup>6</sup> Inter-American Development Bank, op. cit., p. 112.

<sup>7</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., pp. 43-44.

qualifications who would accept less money were taking the available jobs. Another reason for the limited educational impact of many of these institutions is the fact that in some communities they serve as a substitute for general secondary education.<sup>8</sup>

Curriculum. Table 17 outlines the two-year professional sequence in the normal school program. At the beginning of the sixth year, during the third semester in the table shown above, the students have their first period of practicum. For four weeks there are no classes, and they are placed in charge of duties related to the conduct of the demonstration school. This responsibility includes enrollment duties, classification of pupils, administration of admission and makeup examinations, organization of parent-teacher groups, and supervision of activities. Regular classes are then resumed. Students have their second practicum during the last four weeks of the last semester, during which they perform end-of-the-year activities. This includes conducting review, administering final examinations, closing sessions, keeping academic records, inventorying supplies, and planning work for the following year.

According to the Official Guide of the Ministry of Education, student teaching is a continuous, highly individualized process, extending from specialized study of methods through direct observation and participation in school activities and culminating with the teaching process itself. This process varies with individual student needs, and student teaching grades reflect performance in all of these areas, not merely teaching performance.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Arango, op. cit., p. 39.

<sup>9</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Programas de Educación para Normales, Bogota: Editorial Bedout, 1965, pp. 62-64.

TABLE 17

NORMAL SCHOOL CURRICULUM: PROFESSIONAL CYCLE<sup>10</sup>  
(Fifth and Sixth Years of Secondary Education)

	Four Semesters (15 weeks each) (In Hours Per Week)			
	1st	2nd	3rd*	4th**
Religion	2	2	2	1
Mathematics	3	2		
Physics	4	3		
Principles and Techniques of Education	6	4		
Educational Psychology	5	4		
Philosophy and History of Education	2	2	3	3
School Administration	2	2		
Educational Sociology	3	3		
Drawing	1	1		
Professional Orientation Seminar	2			
Integration into Practice Teaching	6	6	5	5
Cooperative Project	2	2		
Library Activities	1	1		
Chemistry		3	6	
Instructional Aids		2	2	
Seminar in Colombian Educa- tional Problems		2		
Social Studies			3	5
Methods of Teaching Spanish			3	5
Health Education			2	4
Domestic Science			2	3
Agriculture Science			2	3
Physical Education and Recreation			2	2
Musical Education			1	2
Seminar in National Socio- Economic Problems			2	
Student Teaching (4 weeks)			(156 hrs. total)	(156 hrs. total)
Community Project			4	4
Seminar in Student Teaching Problems	—	—	—	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>39</b>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 62-63.

\*Courses are of 11 weeks duration, except for Student Teaching.

\*\*Courses are of 12 weeks duration, except for Student Teaching.

Men's normal schools teach a total of 81 class hours of agricultural sciences and 35 hours of family education. In women's normal schools the number of hours is reversed, with the emphasis on domestic science.

There is a promotion at the end of each semester. Students who fail three or more courses must make up the entire semester, although it is possible to take two makeup (habilitación) examinations. Failure rates are about 12 percent in public institutions and about 11 percent in private schools.<sup>11</sup> On a marking scale of five, a student must receive a grade of three or above. If he has failed to attend 10 percent or more of his classes or if any of his grades is lower than two, he will not be permitted to take the final examination. If a grade is lower than two on the final examination, previous grades will be ignored even if they are good, and the examination grade will become the final grade in the subject.<sup>12</sup>

The Ministry of Education chooses all instructors for its own normal schools. Each must have either an appropriate university degree in the area of Education, or possess appropriate higher education and four years of experience, or be in the first category of the escalafón for secondary school teachers and give proof of superior professional ability. Numerous private Catholic normal schools train teachers for both public and private institutions.

Supervisors. The preparation of supervisors for elementary education is the responsibility of the National Pedagogical University and the Pilot Institute of Pamplona, although other courses are conducted occasionally.

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<sup>11</sup> DANE, La Educación . . ., op. cit., p. 29.

<sup>12</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Programas de Educación para Normales, op. cit., p. 21.

In recent years there appears to have been a surplus of trained supervisors. More precisely, this situation probably reflects a deficiency on the part of the educational system in adapting its procedures so that supervisors' training can be utilized effectively. As a consequence, many persons interested in supervision have directed their efforts to the area of educational planning, which commands more prestige.<sup>13</sup>

Criticism. A report by Colombia to the Third Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education in 1963 called for a drastic reduction in the number of normal schools.<sup>14</sup> Although 1963 legislation called for a six-year curriculum, a substantial percentage of the normal schools were still operating on a four-year program. Moreover, many of those in existence do little to serve the community in which they are located.

The First Pedagogical Congress (1966) recommended several changes in the normal school system. Two of the most important recommendations called for a centralization of elementary teacher preparation in full-fledged normal schools with a year of rural teaching an indispensable requirement for a normal school diploma. The Congress also urged the development of night normal schools to more fully qualify in-service teachers. Finally, it recommended special courses on how to conduct a one-teacher, five grade rural school.<sup>15</sup>

In-Service Education. Since 1958 the National Institute for Preparation and Improvement of Teachers (INCADELMA) has been responsible for

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<sup>13</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 290.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 204.

<sup>15</sup> Primer Congreso Pedagógico Nacional, Conclusiones Finales de Comisiones, December, 1966, p. 10.

in-service improvement of elementary school teachers. In 1966, 17,288 uncertified teachers were enrolled in its various programs. Courses offered by INCADELMA are the only substitutes to study in approved secondary schools accepted for admission to or promotion on the escalafón. Unfortunately, INCADELMA has had to undertake its enormous task with such insufficient support that for a time it was able only to conduct correspondence courses and make sporadic visits to departmental capitals.<sup>16</sup> The Roman Catholic Church, however, authorized its educational broadcast network (ACPO) to grant it an hour a day of broadcast time, to enable it to communicate more effectively with its enrolled teachers.<sup>17</sup> Resolution 0730 of 1967 gave priority to in-service vacation courses because they provide greater opportunity for direct contact with teachers.

Secondary Teacher Preparation. Ten of Colombia's universities are recognized for their secondary teacher preparation programs. There is no uniform plan, however, since each university establishes its own subject matter and degree requirements. The usual course of study is four years, with the only prerequisite a secondary bachillerato. The principal institutions responsible for this training are the pedagogical universities and the faculties of education in the regular universities. Graduates of non-university higher education institutions, as well as some of the higher professional university faculties may also qualify as secondary teachers. There were 666 egresados produced in 1965 by institutions dedicated to the preparation of secondary teachers -- a substantial increase over the 262

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<sup>16</sup> Gómez, Memoria . . ., Vol. IV, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>17</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Qué es INCADELMA? Bogota: Instituto Nacional de Capacitación y Perfeccionamiento del Magisterio, 1966, pp. 3 and 54.

produced in 1962. Of this number, 50 were in biology and chemistry, 42 in social studies, 35 in mathematics and physics, 43 in languages, 379 in pedagogy, 106 in philosophy, and 11 in health and physical education.<sup>18</sup>

The best known of the secondary teacher training institutions is the Pedagogical University of Colombia. Founded in 1926, it was newly reformed in 1951, with an institution for men in Tunja and another for women in Bogota. The Pedagogical and Technological University of Colombia at Tunja has three faculties -- education, engineering, and agronomy. Its division of science serves all departments, offering general courses during a student's first year. The division of humanities has a similar service function.

The University now offers a four-year program, but plans to add a fifth year in Education, to supplement the professional training of students who have completed a non-Education program in science or agriculture and desire to teach in secondary schools. A bachillerato or a normal school diploma is required for admission. After a year of general studies, students are counseled and then select a major. Those who lack an aptitude for teaching are advised to withdraw from teaching programs. The latter usually continue in one of the non-teaching fields of the University.

The University at Tunja has recently introduced a credit system. In a ten-semester program major subjects normally account for about 90 credits, minor ones for 45 credits, and general education courses for 34 credits. Student teaching is performed for a semester in one of the 50 schools in the region.

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<sup>18</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 83.

The National Pedagogical University in Bogota offers a more traditional pattern of teacher preparation. Its faculties include biology and chemistry, social sciences and economics, philology and languages, mathematics and physics, psychology and educational sciences, and physical education and health. It also has an Institute of Pedagogical Research.

Curriculum. Samples of some of the newer programs in secondary teacher preparation appear in Table 18 and 19.

#### Certification and Classification

Colombia's classification and advancement system is known as the escalafón. It is an official register which identifies and rewards teachers in accordance with their level of formal preparation and years of experience. The escalafón is used to determine the rate of pay in schools belonging to the Ministry of Education. It is also the basis for evaluating the quality of instructional personnel in departmental and private schools. Once a teacher is registered at a particular level, he or she cannot be downgraded.

Elementary. Some of the qualifications acceptable for the highest of the four levels of the national elementary escalafón are as follows: (1) licenciados from higher normal schools with a degree recognized by the government who have taught not less than two academic years, (3) teachers at the elementary level and graduates of rural normal schools whose diplomas have been certified by the government and who have taught not less than eight academic years, (4) priests who present a certificate of ordination signed by the appropriate ordinary, (5) academic secondary school graduates (bachilleres) with approved diplomas who have taught at least one year,

TABLE 18

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBIA, BOGOTA  
 COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION<sup>19</sup>  
 (1968)

## Curriculum in Pedagogy and Educational Administration

Code	Course	Weekly Hours	Prerequisite
44811	Writing Techniques	3	--
43111	Philosophy	3	--
54106	General Psychology I	4	--
15119	Mathematics (Algebra and Trigonometry)	5	--
48111	Pedagogy and Methods I ( <u>Pedagogía y Didáctica</u> )	3	--
44121	English I	4	--
<u>II Semester</u>			
44812	Methodology of Written Work	-	44811
43211	Philosophy II	3	43111
51130	Human Biology	3	--
44122	English II	4	44121
48112	Pedagogy and Methods II	3	48111
42001	General Sociology	3	--
<u>III Semester</u>			
45125	Developmental ( <u>Evolutiva</u> ) Psychology	3	45106
48115	History of Education I	3	--
48113	Special Methods ( <u>Didáctica Especial</u> ) I	3	48112
48127	Curriculum Planning I	3	--
48123	Statistics of Education I	3	15118
44127	English III	4	44122
<u>IV Semester</u>			
48116	History of Education II	3	48115
48114	Special Methods II	3	48113
44128	English IV	4	44127
48124	Educational Statistics II	3	48123
48913	Audio Visual Aids	3	48914
48146	Sociometrics	3	48123

<sup>19</sup>Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Faculty of Education Curriculum, 1968, mimeographed.

TABLE 18 (continued)

Code	Course	Weekly Hours	Prerequisite
<u>V Semester</u>			
48121	Educational Planning	3	48124
48145	Seminar	-	--
48126	Sociology of Education	3	42001
48912	Educational Psychology	3	45106
48132	Practice Teaching I	3	48114
48125	Evaluation Techniques	3	48124
<u>VI Semester</u>			
48137	Comparative Education	3	48115
48922	Educational Administration	3	--
48142	Philosophy of Education I	3	48211
48133	Practice Teaching II	3	48132
48136	Psychometry	4	48124
48148	Mental Hygiene in Education	3	--
<u>VIII Semester</u>			
45202	Guidance (Orientación Profesional) I	6	--
48139	School Organization	3	48922
48143	Philosophy of Education II	3	48142
48128	Curriculum Planning II	3	48127
48134	Practice Teaching III	3	48133
48149	Human Relations and Ethics	3	--
<u>VIII Semester</u>			
45203	Guidance (Orientación Profesional) II	6	45202
48141	School Supervision	3	48139
48135	Practice Teaching IV	3	48134
--	Seminar (Elective)	3	--

TABLE 18 (continued)

## Curriculum in Social Studies Teaching

Code	Course	Weekly Hours	Prerequisite
<u>I Semester</u>			
44811	Writing Techniques	3	--
43111	Philosophy I	3	--
42001	General Sociology I	3	--
15119	Mathematics (Algebra and Trigonometry)	5	--
47010	Anthropology	3	--
46900	Physical Geography	3	--
44121	English	4	--
<u>II Semester</u>			
43211	Philosophy II	3	43111
46444	Ancient History	3	--
42015	General Sociology II (Elective)	3	42001
18914	Statistics	3	15118
46800	Physical Geography II	3	46900
45106	General Psychology	4	--
44122	English	4	--
<u>III Semester</u>			
46324	History of Colombia I (16th - 18th Centuries)	3	--
46910	General Regional Geography I	3	--
45125	Developmental ( <u>Evolutiva</u> ) Psychology	4	45106
48914	Pedagogy and Methods	3	45106
46960	Cosmography and Cartography	3	46900
44127	English III	4	--
<u>IV Semester</u>			
46424	History of Colombia I (16th - 18th Centuries)	3	46324
46910	General Regional Geography II	3	46910
47010	Anthropology	3	--
48912	Educational Psychology	3	45125
46681	Art History	3	--
48244	Seminar on Cartography	4	--
44128	English	4	--

TABLE 18 (continued)

Code	Course	Weekly Hours	Prerequisite
<u>V Semester</u>			
46025	History of Colombia II (19th - 20th Centuries)	3	46424
48213	Special Methods I	3	48914
46544	Medieval History	3	46444
46920	Geography of America I	3	46910
46564	History of America I	3	--
57610	Ethnology of Colombia and America	3	47010
16106	Statistics (Human and Physical Geography of Colombia)	3	--
<u>VI Semester</u>			
46024	History of Colombia II (19th - 20th Centuries)	3	46025
48214	Special Methods II (Interpretive Programs)	3	48213
46644	Medieval History	3	46544
46920	Geography of America II	3	46544
46664	History of America II	3	46564
48913	Audio-Visual Aids	3	48914
<u>VII Semester</u>			
46752	Modern and Contemporary History	4	46644
46950	Geography of Colombia I	3	--
48221	Institutions I	3	--
48232	Practice Teaching I	3	48213
40010	Introduction to Economics I	3	15119
48245	Seminar	-	--
<u>VIII Semester</u>			
46852	Contemporary History	4	46752
46950	Geography of Colombia	3	--
48222	Institutions II	3	48221
48922	Educational Administration	3	--
48233	Practice Teaching II	3	48215

TABLE 19  
 UNIVERSITY OF ANTIOQUIA, MEDELLIN<sup>20</sup>  
 COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
 1968  
 SAMPLE CURRICULUM

Major Area: Mathematics

	<u>Credits</u>
Major Area: Mathematics	52
Minor Area: Physics	32
Professional Courses In Education	35
General Studies	43
Total	<u>162</u>

	Weekly Classes	Weekly Laboratory	Credits
<b>First Year (Enrollment in the Institute of General Studies)</b>			
Mathematics (2 semesters)	4	-	8
Chemistry (2 semesters)	4	3	10
Social Sciences (1 semester)	4	-	4
Plane Geometry or Biology (1 semester)	4	-	4
Spanish (2 semesters)	3	-	6
Humanities (1 semester elective)	3	-	3
Modern Language (2 semesters) (English or French)	4	-	8
Total	26	3	43*

\*Maximum credits: 24 per semester

Second Year (Course Work at the Faculty of Education)

First Semester:

Calculus I	4	2	4
Mathematical Logic	4	-	4
General Chemistry II	4	3	5
Analytic Geometry	3	-	3
General Psychology	4	-	4
English	<u>4</u>	-	<u>4</u>
Total	23	5	24

Second Semester:

Calculus II	4	2	4
Abstract Algebra	4	-	4
Physics I	5	3	6
Adolescent Psychology	4	-	4
General Algebra	<u>4</u>	-	<u>4</u>
Total	21	5	22

TABLE 19 (continued)

	Weekly Classes	Weekly Laboratory	Credits
<b><u>Third Year</u></b>			
<b><u>First Semester:</u></b>			
Geometry and Calculus III	4	-	4
Audiovisual Aids	2	3	3
Physics II	4	3	5
Sociology of Education	4	-	4
Vector Analysis	4	-	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20</b>
<b><u>Second Semester:</u></b>			
Differential Calculus	4	-	4
Physics III	5	3	6
Statistics I	4	-	4
Learning and Methods	4	-	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>18</b>
<b><u>Fourth Year</u></b>			
<b><u>First Semester:</u></b>			
Differential Geometry	3	-	3
Statistics II	4	-	4
Tensor Analysis	4	-	4
Educational Administration	3	-	3
Practice Teaching	4	-	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>18</b>
<b><u>Second Semester:</u></b>			
Introduction to Topology	4	-	4
Modern Physics	4	-	4
Philosophy of Education	4	-	4
Practice Teaching	4	-	4
Professional Ethics	2	-	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>18</b>

<sup>20</sup>Universidad de Antioquia, Boletín: Áreas Mayores y Menores de Estudio para Estudiantes Regulares y Especiales, Medellín: Facultad de Educación, 1968, pp. 25-28.

(6) individuals with at least five years of secondary education and 12 years of teaching experience, (7) those with at least four years of secondary schooling and 15 years of teaching experience, (8) those with at least three years of secondary schooling and 19 years of teaching experience, (9) individuals who have successfully completed seminary study up to and including philosophy with at least 8 years of teaching experience, (10) foreign teachers whose preparation and service are judged equivalent.

In addition, according to a 1962 law, teachers who have completed five years of service in official schools at the first level and who have passed a pedagogical skill test with a grade of 80 percent or more, will receive a monthly increase in salary of 25 percent. Those with ten years at the top level will be entitled to a 50 percent increase in salary. Teachers of "superior level" who serve in rural schools will have their service time for advancement on the escalafón increased 50 percent.<sup>21</sup> The great variation in elementary teacher quality can be seen easily by comparing levels on the escalafón with percentages, as shown below:

<u>Level</u>	Percentage of Elementary Teachers At Each Level of the Escalafón in Two Selected Departments <sup>22</sup>	
	(1966) <u>Antioquia</u>	<u>Tolima</u>
First	29%	10%
Second	27	11
Third	23	11
Fourth	8	9
Not Eligible for <u>Escalafón</u>	12	59

<sup>21</sup> Bermúdez, op. cit., pp. 46-48.

<sup>22</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media Vol. I, op. cit., p. 82.

Salaries also vary considerably, even when teachers are at the same level of the escalafón. This fact is illustrated below:

Range of Salaries Paid to Public Elementary Teachers in Various Departments According to Rank on the National Escalafón<sup>23</sup> (1966)

<u>Level</u>	<u>Expressed in Pesos Per Month</u>	
	<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>
First	1,470	1,000
Second	1,420	872
Third	1,370	800
Fourth	1,320	743
Not Eligible for <u>Escalafón</u>	1,200	500

Salaries were highest in the department of Antioquia, while they were among the lowest in Nariño.

Secondary. The escalafón for secondary teachers follows a principle similar to that of elementary teachers, although the criteria employed are different. The escalafón in use in 1968 was considered unsatisfactory for several reasons and was in the process of being revised. Even so, an examination of some of its criteria will serve to illustrate the differences between the two. A university student with the degree of licenciado enters the second level of the escalafón directly; after six years he is promoted to the first. The same principle applies to a graduate of the various university programs for the preparation of secondary teachers. A beginning teacher with some secondary education may enter the fourth level of the secondary escalafón after completing a 200-260 hour in-service training course offered by the Ministry of Education. After four years of experience, he becomes eligible for the third level. An individual with only four years of secondary education and 12 years of

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<sup>23</sup>Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. VIII, op. cit., p. 204.

experience is eligible for the second level. With 18 years experience, he is eligible for the first.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, a secondary teacher with at least four years of experience may take a competence examination, given annually by the Ministry of Education to qualify teachers to enter the escalafón. Those who fail the examinations may take special courses. A university graduate, for example, may qualify for the escalafón after taking 40 class hours of psychopedagogy and 50 hours of methodology.<sup>25</sup>

Administrators, inspectors, institute directors, and the like, must rank on the first level of the escalafón. The higher the teacher on the escalafón, the more preference he is given for vacant positions in national schools. The production of a textbook or the publication of an educational journal without government subsidy for one year counts on the escalafón as two years of school service.<sup>26</sup>

A survey of 923 teachers in 59 academic secondary schools showed that 38 percent were at the first level of the escalafón, 38 percent at the second, 3 percent at the third, 1 percent at the fourth, and 21 percent had no permanent status. Many teachers qualified at the first and second levels, are already teaching in schools belonging to the national government, but due to extreme budget limitations, teachers not qualified for the escalafón frequently are hired in order to save money.<sup>27</sup>

Salaries. The salary schedule for secondary teachers ranges from 2,350 pesos at the highest level to 1,400 pesos at the lowest. National

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<sup>24</sup> Arango, op. cit., pp. 45-46.

<sup>25</sup> Decree 1425 of 1961 and Law 20 of 1960.

<sup>26</sup> Bermúdez, op. cit., p. 58.

<sup>27</sup> Varner, op. cit., p. 15.

secondary schools pay somewhat better than departmental secondary schools. A cross-section comparison of other salary levels shows a monthly income of 741 pesos for unskilled laborers, 1,040 for receptionists, 1,079 for file clerks, 1,232 for typists, 5,539 for auditors, and 5,800 for civil engineers.<sup>28</sup> A common problem in departmental schools is that salaries may be either several months late or never paid at all due to shortages of funds. When shortages occur, budgets for schools are usually the first affected. In urban areas, however, salaries are nearly always paid.<sup>29</sup> Only national teachers are paid for 12 months. Departmental teachers are usually paid for ten months and receive no vacation salary.

Criticism. One objection to the present escalafones is that length of service is the only criterion used for advancement to the highest ranks. Although some in-service courses are counted in lieu of service time, there is still a need to establish more effective incentives for teachers in order to improve academic qualifications. There should also be still higher levels, attainable only by acquiring further education. A young normal school graduate now may enter the second rank of the elementary escalafón and by the age of 20 reach the first level, with little incentive to pursue professional improvement during the rest of his career. Special categories are also needed to encourage the training of school administrators, especially since the Ministry of Education is attempting to develop large central secondary institutions. Further, there is a need for a more flexible category that will admit instructors trained in shop and technical specialties. At present most of these teachers are ineligible

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<sup>28</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 87-89.

<sup>29</sup> Havens, op. cit., p. 10.

for the escalafón, although many are generally capable individuals, well-prepared in their fields.

A further need exists to employ the escalafón as a device to encourage teachers to serve in rural areas, especially in the new five-grade rural elementary schools. Special incentives are essential because of poor living conditions and the prevalence of rural violence. Greater stability in teaching assignments should also be encouraged. In addition, experience has indicated that normal school graduates become more efficient elementary teachers than do graduates of in-service programs, and the abilities of the former should be more adequately rewarded by the escalafón than at present.<sup>30</sup>

#### Teachers' Benefits

Teachers in national schools participate in social security by paying a tax of 5 percent of their salaries. They can then retire after 20 years, drawing retirement pay equal to 75 percent of their next to last year's salary. Some teachers have retired and begun teaching again, thereby collecting retirement pay in addition to full salary. There have even been some instances where individuals have retired twice and continued teaching. Teachers may also participate in several retirement programs on the national, departmental, and municipal levels. Legislation is now being considered which will insist upon retirement at a certain age.

Private schools may participate in national retirement programs, but are not required to do so. It has been argued that schools which receive a small subvention from the national or departmental government

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<sup>30</sup>Arango, op. cit., pp. 34, 40, 45-46.

should be considered as meeting the requirements of the state, and that their teachers should be protected by state retirement requirements. The applicability of existing legislation on this point is still under debate.

Teachers in national schools receive numerous benefits which accrue to them as public employees. In certain respects, these benefits accrue to all employees, public or private. For example, teachers earning less than 1,500 pesos monthly are entitled to half their transportation fares paid, to and from work, if they live in a city of over 75,000 people. They also receive 15 days of paid vacation. A family subsidy is paid to both public and private employees earning less than 2,000 pesos monthly, in cities of more than 100,000 people and to those earning less than 1,500 pesos elsewhere. Hospitals and medical services are also covered by payroll deduction. Pregnant women in private or public employ are entitled to eight weeks off with pay. Sick leave for illness not caused at work is computed at the rate of two-thirds pay for the first 90 days, and one-half pay for the remainder of the leave.<sup>31</sup> Additional subsidies have been paid to ten-month teachers for living at the school. These subsidies are increased if there are no room and board facilities. Christmas bonuses often amount to as much as a full month's salary for some of the lower-paid teachers. Outside the national system, however, the pay is generally lower, and pensions and bonuses do not exist, even though required by law.<sup>32</sup>

Teacher Placement. The National Front government formed in 1957 established the policy that all government employees be divided between

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<sup>31</sup> Bermúdez, op. cit., pp. 98, 100, 104-106.

<sup>32</sup> Varner, op. cit., p. 12.

Conservatives and Liberals. As a result, a teacher seeking employment needs to find not only a vacant position, but also a party vacancy. Naturally, political assistance in finding such positions often proves very helpful.

Teacher placement is handled through ministry or secretariat channels, on the national, departmental or municipal level. It is widely believed (and often true) that teachers with the most political pull receive the best positions. Once a teacher is assigned to a departmental rural school, it is likely to be difficult for him to advance to a more desirable urban school, no matter how able or well-prepared he may be. This is why a few well-qualified teachers who are without pull may be found in some rural areas. Some well-informed Colombians believe that these conditions have improved considerably in recent years, particularly in schools run by the Ministry of National Education. The Civil Service Law of 1962 is thought to be a contributing factor. Unfortunately, there are no private employment services for teachers.

#### Teachers' Organizations

Teachers do not play a significant role in forming public opinion on educational matters. This is due partly to their inhibitions about participating in a public dialogue and partly to their general lack of social prestige. As public employees, teachers are not permitted to serve in leadership positions in political parties, nor may they speak or publish on political themes.<sup>33</sup> Their only significant organization is the teachers union.

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<sup>33</sup> Bermúdez, op. cit., p. 15.

Colombia's first legally organized teachers' union was the Educators' Association of Cundinamarca, founded in 1938.<sup>34</sup> The present national organization, founded in 1961, the Colombian Federation of Educators (FECODE), has 24 affiliated unions claiming about 65,000 members. Many of this number are affiliated with 16 departmental educational cooperatives, which have some limited economic power.

The Federation claims to have conducted more than 60 strikes and to have secured some 500,000,000 pesos for general educational purposes, in addition to having reduced political interference in school affairs. Many teachers, however, still live in truly miserable circumstances. Delays in receiving their salaries and other irregularities are another indication of their limited influence. Inflation in the early 1960's and an unfavorable balance of foreign trade were accompanied by severe shortages of governmental funds during that period. Due to legislative inaction in increasing taxes, the government in 1962-63 was as much as a year behind in the payment of some of its bills. It was unable even to pay all of its employees the wage increases it had granted during the winter. As a result, teachers went on strike in many departments because their salaries were two or three months in arrears.<sup>35</sup>

Local teachers' organizations have very limited resources. They lack offices, specialized services, and full-time employees, among other things. The National Federation is somewhat more affluent, but the economic circumstances of its members have been so poor that it has generally concentrated its efforts upon improving their income rather than

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<sup>34</sup> Renovación Educativa, September, 1967, p. 3.

<sup>35</sup> Holt, op. cit., p. 159.

seeking more fundamental educational reforms.<sup>36</sup>

This picture has changed somewhat since the Federation's sponsorship of the First National Pedagogical Congress in December, 1966. This organization sought to join together all Colombian factions interested in educational reform. Representatives of the Federation claim that these efforts led directly to the principal features of the Ministry of Education's current Emergency Plan.

An indication of the Federation's position can be found in its statements at the Congress. Its first concern was for the extension of the educational system to the whole population. In this process, reforms should respect the following priorities: school attendance, literacy and adult education, rural education, technical and vocational education, secondary (middle) education, and finally higher education.

The means proposed to achieve these goals included: the investment of a minimum of 20 percent of the national budget in education beginning in 1967; the requiring of private businesses to invest in education and the instituting of appropriate enforcement measures; the increasing of the national budget over a four-year period until it amounts to 4 percent of gross national product.

For teachers, the Federation sought legislation to attain some standards such as:<sup>37</sup>

- (1) entrance into teaching only by those possessing teaching diplomas or degrees,
- (2) improvement of in-service teachers by appropriate salary and professional incentives,

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<sup>36</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 289.

<sup>37</sup> Renovación Educativa, August 6, 1967, p. 2.

- (3) income adequate to support the teacher and his family,
- (4) job security and personal freedom,
- (5) professional training of educational administrators to serve at all national, state, and local levels,
- (6) national administration and supervision of education in accordance with the Constitution, and
- (7) creation of a permanent national research and advisory council to continue the work of the First National Pedagogical Congress.

The Federation also conducts its own cooperative experimental school in an effort to point the way to better, more practical education.

At a national meeting for union leaders in 1968, FECODE's president identified several current problems. These included: failure of the various governmental treasuries to send money to pay back salaries of teachers; failure of some member unions to comply with agreements previously made; and accusations, directed primarily towards the Ministry of Education, that it had applied the Emergency Plan without having consulted teachers' organizations, and that it had imposed dictatorial methods of work, blocked freedom of association, and increased persecution of union activities.<sup>38</sup> At the same time, FECODE itself has been criticized, at least on the local level, as a vehicle really designed to protect the interests of those teachers who already have an effective influence in the school system.<sup>39</sup>

A secondary teachers union, the National Federation of Licenciados, also functions. FECODE has also sought, with modest success, to enroll

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<sup>38</sup> Adalberto Carvajal Salcedo, Mensaje al Primer Seminario de Dirigentes Sindicales, Bogota: Federación Colombiana de Educadores, February, 1968, p. 1.

<sup>39</sup> Havens, op. cit., p. 11.

secondary teachers in its ranks. Private teachers are not professionally organized. There are several reasons for this. To begin with, many have no career commitment because teaching is merely a stepping-stone to other careers. Also, they fear loss of their jobs. Finally, many do not see union affiliation as appropriate for teachers.

Another important association, the National Confederation of Catholic Schools (Colegios), is quite different in nature. One of its principal aims is to secure greater freedom from Ministry of Education mandates, particularly in the field of curriculum organization. Five member schools have been granted the right by the Ministry to serve as pilot schools; that is they have been granted the freedom to devise their own curricula.<sup>40</sup>

Problems. Improvement of the teacher's lot is often difficult. For example, it costs little more to hire two poorly-trained teachers than it does to employ one normal school graduate. In addition, a teacher who dissents from the view of local politicians may, as a public employee, either be transferred to a remote post or suspended from duty. This is true particularly in rural areas. Moreover, a change of politicians may result in the replacement of an experienced, qualified teacher by one of limited qualifications. All of these unfortunate situations take place because the government has not insisted on compliance with Law 97 of 1945 which nullifies the appointment of unqualified teachers.<sup>41</sup>

Teaching is often regarded by a young man as a vocation which offers only a limited opportunity for raising his status. Many Colombians believe (usually incorrectly) than individuals go into teaching because they cannot

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<sup>40</sup> Uribe, op. cit., pp. 236-39.

<sup>41</sup> Arango, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

earn a better living in other occupations.<sup>42</sup> Improved salaries, an escalafón that better rewards the ablest, and the enforcement of regulations which discourage the use of poorly-qualified teachers in schools which receive government subsidies, would do much to make the profession more attractive.

Finally, Colombia is noticeably deficient in any sort of periodical publication which might create and extend a spirit of professionalism among Colombian teachers and educational leaders. The First National Pedagogical Congress called upon the Ministry of Education to publish a periodical which would help teachers by providing information about opportunities for improving their qualifications, changes in educational regulations, and methods to help them function more effectively in their classrooms.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 185.

<sup>43</sup> Primer Congreso Pedagógico Nacional, Carrera . . . , op. cit., p. 7.

## CHAPTER 11

### PRIVATE AND CHURCH-SPONSORED EDUCATION

The educational activities of church and state in Colombia are interdependent in many respects. Private schools may receive subsidies from public funds, public schools may meet in church buildings, Catholic nuns and priests may teach in public schools, officials of the Catholic hierarchy are granted positions on boards of public educational institutions, the official school curriculum is imposed upon private elementary and secondary schools, and Catholic religious teaching is required in public schools. Innumerable other inter-relationships exist. Yet in important respects state and private educational objectives differ significantly. This chapter will deal with differences not touched upon previously.

Private schools are authorized to select their own teachers, to draft and administer their own examinations, and to organize their own curricula. The Ministry of National Education, however, establishes standards for the curriculum and for the passing of examinations, as well as for the grading system. The Ministry's principal concern is that the public be assured a certain minimal quality of instruction.

Public schools are generally avoided by all those who can afford to do so. The middle-class family places a great emphasis on education and makes considerable sacrifice in order that at least some of its children may attend a private institution. Parents frequently feel that the best education is to be found in a private school, where they hope

their offspring will develop better social class associations, which they feel contribute to the quality of the educational experience. Both urban and rural students show a tendency to enroll in private institutions as family finances permit.

Private education receives governmental support in the form of direct subsidies, scholarships, and some teachers assigned and paid by the national, departmental, or municipal government. Some teachers in private colegios are paid by the government in exchange for scholarships, which the schools grant to poor children (usually of the school's choice). There are also several free private schools which benefit children of the lower (popular) classes. Information on the financing of private education is very limited, but of the 114,838,345 pesos from public sources expended on universities in 1962, 5,944,100 went to private universities enrolling almost 50 percent of the university students.<sup>1</sup> Direct grants-in-aid totalling a much smaller sum were also made available to a number of private elementary and secondary institutions.

Enrollments. In 1965, 322,092 or 14 percent of the total number of pupils were enrolled in private elementary education, 21,545 or 38 percent in private normal education, 229,585 or 54 percent in general secondary education, and 20,660 or 45 percent in higher education.<sup>2</sup> Well-known private schools include the following:

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<sup>1</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., pp. 97-98.

<sup>2</sup> This includes approximately two percent in non-university higher education with only four (instead of six) years of secondary preparation.

Well-Known Private Schools<sup>3</sup>

<u>Name</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Estimated Enrollment</u>
Gimnasio Moderno	Bogota	400
Colegio San Bartolomé	Bogota	1,000
Gimnasio Femenino	Bogota	500
Liceo de la Salle	Bogota	600
Instituto Cervantes	Medellin	350
Colegio Fernández Baena	Barranquilla	300
Colegio Biffi	Barranquilla	400
Colegio Villegas	Calli	400
Gimnasio Manizales	Manizales	300
Colegio de Cristo	Manizales	300
Colegio Champagnat	Pasto	300
Colegio Andrés Bello	Cúcuta	300
Colegio Nuestra Señora Del Pilar	Bucaramanga	300
Colegio Caldas	Bucaramanga	300

Church-Sponsored Education: Roman Catholic

Catholic education may be distinguished from public education by a specific cultural content which emphasizes Catholic values in every aspect of teaching and social life. Christian (Roman Catholic) education of youth is an officially recognized aim of national education. The preamble to the act by which some articles of the political Constitution of Colombia are modified in accordance with the reform plebiscite of 1957 says, "For the purposes of supporting national unity, one of the bases of which is the recognition given by the political parties that the Roman Catholic religion is of the nation, and that like all public powers they will protect it and see to it that it is respected as an essential element of the social order . . ."<sup>4</sup> Article 12 of the Concordat with the Holy See (1887) further establishes that,

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<sup>3</sup>U. S. Embassy, Bogota, Division of Cultural Affairs.

<sup>4</sup>Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 257.

In the university and secondary schools, in elementary schools and in other centers of teaching, education and political instruction will be organized and directed in conformity with the dogmas and spirit (la moral) of the Catholic religion. Religious instruction and the pious practices of the Catholic religion shall be obligatory in such centers.<sup>5</sup>

Another aspect of educational relations between church and state is the agreement concerning missions reached between the government and the Holy See in 1953, which authorized to head prelates of missions some responsibility for direction and supervision of education in underpopulated territories of Colombia so that "education [may] be oriented in Mission Territory in the spirit of an in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church, Apostolic and Roman. . ."<sup>6</sup>

Provisions such as these permit the Catholic clergy to participate in many phases of secular educational life. A church dignitary is always appointed to a commission studying an important current problem, and a churchman is present at every public ceremony. Thus, two fundamental questions are linked with church influence in Colombian education -- academic freedom and freedom of conscience. Concerning academic freedom, a church statement in the early 1960's noted that

It is not possible among us [in Colombia] to hold any university teaching position with a rationalist, non-Catholic, or anti-Catholic viewpoint, since the Colombian state trusted the church in good faith to protect Christian order and preserve Catholic values in the field of education.

The statement then went on to reaffirm that

Consequently, freedom of teaching, of learning, and academic and scientific freedom should be adapted to

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 257-58.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 258.

the values of the Catholic religion which the Colombian nation professes and which was always considered by the state as an essential element in the social order.<sup>7</sup>

This statement, by the National Secretariat of Education of the church (SENALDI), is especially important because this body has the principal responsibility for representing the Colombian episcopate in its dealings with the Ministry of National Education.

The Catholic Church has used its position to influence the content of what is taught. Some of the most ably written (and incidentally the most expensive) textbooks have been prepared by clerics. In the past the church has sought by restrictive campaigns to reduce competition from public and non-Catholic private schools for students, particularly in rural areas and sparsely populated national territories. This was especially evident during the Gómez-Urdaneta regime of 1950-1953. Due to the political importance of its position, the church has also influenced governmental policy in other ways. Until about 15 years ago, the church's greatest emphasis was upon providing education for the politically influential classes, leaving the lower and middle classes largely untended. This lack was partially remedied by public schools and Protestant missions.<sup>8</sup>

The church has often been criticized for providing schools only where student families could pay for all or most of the cost. Church spokesmen contend that their efforts have been greatest on the secondary level where the government's effort has been less. Data gathered during

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<sup>7</sup> Uribe, op. cit., pp. 413 and 417.

<sup>8</sup> Fals Borda, op. cit., pp. 187-88.

the 1950's indicate that of 3,626 nuns and priests engaged in teaching, only 7 percent were located in rural areas, these being primarily members of the Capuchino Mission in the Guajiro and Putumayo regions of the country.<sup>9</sup>

It is equally clear, however, that the church now recognizes the wide need for rural educational reform, for it has taken some steps which demonstrate its concern. Although church activity on behalf of rural education dates back at least to the 1940's, the surprisingly large number of Colombian priests who have left the fold in recent years -- something hitherto unheard of in Colombia -- has added to this sense of urgency. One liberal priest, Camilo Torres, who received considerable publicity when he left the church early in the 1960's, was eventually killed while fighting for anti-government guerrillas in support of rural peasants. Circumstances such as these are viewed as a major factor in the liberalization of the church's position toward rural education and toward coeducation, both of which reduce the cost of extending elementary education.

Schools. The close collaboration between church and state in many communities is illustrated by the fact that many elementary schools in public buildings are taught by nuns, while many schools housed in churches offer free education.<sup>10</sup> A survey of normal schools in the department of Cundinamarca illustrates this complexity. In 1967 there were 34 private normal schools, 29 of which were directed by religious organizations,

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<sup>9</sup> Havens, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>10</sup> George Comstock and Nathan Maccoby, The Peace Corps: Educational Television Project in Colombia -- Two Years of Research, The Project's First Semester -- Pupil Achievement, Teacher Attitudes, and the Work of the Utilization Volunteer, Stanford: Institute for Communications Research, Research Report Nr. 2, 1966. p. 9.

and 5 of which were secular. Of the total number of private institutions 7 were for men and 27 for women. Cundinamarca also had 2 departmental (public) normal schools for men, both of which were secular, and 9 for women, 5 of which were secular and one of which was religious, with 3 unspecified. There were also 3 national normal schools located in the department, 1 for men and 2 for women. National normal schools are often directed by priests or nuns, although this was not the case in Cundinamarca.<sup>11</sup>

Private education has often been criticized for being motivated solely by profit. However, a former officer of the Confederation of Catholic Colegios calculates that church support for secondary schools amounts to as much as 70 pesos monthly per student. Because the better known private schools serve a socio-economic elite, private education has acquired a negative, anti-democratic image. The government, however, recognizes that a seller's market exists in secondary education, and it is making an effort to expand its facilities rapidly.

Mission Territories. These territories generally include regions situated on the hot plains, where isolation makes living conditions primitive. They comprise more than 70 percent of Colombia's land area, but contain only about one-eighth of the population. In these areas activities of the church are largely autonomous, except that elementary schools seeking governmental recognition must conform to the official curriculum. A 1952 measure intensified government help to Catholic missions. It gave an annual quota of about one million pesos to the Apostolic Nuncio for distribution, and another ten-and-one-

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<sup>11</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Escuelas Normales Nacionales, Departamentales y Privadas, Bogota: Sección: Formación, Capacitación y Perfeccionamiento de Maestros, 1967, pp. 3, 9, and 14.

half million pesos to the heads of missions, the Vicar's Apostolic Prefects. These funds support elementary schools and enable church authorities to appoint and dismiss teachers. Some 316 priests, about 100 nuns, and over 3,500 lay teachers have been serving more than 100,000 pupils. When the political status of a territory is raised to that of a department, church officials must cede their control over the educational budget to civil authorities. The mission programs are structured so that they can be gradually phased out.<sup>12</sup>

Religious Education. Most students preparing for a religious career are enrolled in the lower seminaries (seminarios menores). All of these institutions are private, and they offer instruction following the general outlines of the bachillerato, although persons who leave the program are required to take qualifying examinations if they want to obtain an official secondary diploma. The 1962 reform of secondary education anticipated the fact that the first four years of religious education at the secondary level would correspond to the basic cycle of the bachillerato.<sup>13</sup> In 1964, 65 such institutions -- 53 for men and 12 for women -- provided education for 6,272 males and 640 females.<sup>14</sup> In 1966 there were also 31 institutions classified as higher seminaries (seminarios mayores), enrolling a total of 1,510 students. All of their students were males except for 23 of the 45 enrolled in the International Baptist Theological Seminary at Cali.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Bernal Medina, op. cit., pp. 362-63.

<sup>13</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 148.

<sup>14</sup> DANE, La Educación . . ., op. cit., p. 25.

<sup>15</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Estadísticas . . ., op. cit., pp. 15-16.

Criticism. Relations between public education and church-dominated private education have been described tactfully as a condition of peaceful coexistence. Catholic education is criticized for not giving enough emphasis to the social and physical sciences, for over-emphasizing religious doctrines and prayer, and for producing individuals who become reactionaries and traditionalists.<sup>16</sup> Catholics object that regulations of the Ministry of Education leave little leeway for experimentation. They feel that the minimum program which official decrees call for is so extensive that it leaves little time for other activities. Also regarded as onerous are the criteria used to evaluate schools, particularly those that focus on physical facilities, such as lighting, number of library books, etc. Meanwhile, it is claimed, little systematic effort is exerted to evaluate the quality of teachers.

#### Acción Cultural Popular (ACPO)

Acción Cultural Popular (People's Cultural Action) is one of the church's most important contributions to rural education. It seeks, principally by means of radio broadcasts, to reduce illiteracy and raise economic and social standards among rural peasants. This program has recognized the fact that some eight-and-one-half million largely neglected peasants represent a social, productive and consumer force that should be incorporated into the national economy. Acción Cultural Popular (ACPO) seeks to change the mental outlook of the rural peasant still living on the fringe of society. It wants him not only to accept but to seek educational

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<sup>16</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., p. 268.

improvement. The principal means it uses are the radio, specifically the nine transmitters of Radio Sutatenza, and its newspaper, El Campesino (The Peasant). The program is based on the premise that lasting improvement of the masses is impossible unless they develop self-respect, an awareness of their own problems, and a desire to do something about them on their own initiative.

Background. The movement was begun in 1947 by Father José Joaquin Salcedo, a twenty-four-year-old priest, who arrived in Sutatenza to help the local Catholic padre. Sutatenza was then a village of 165 people, but there were 9,000 more within a few hours travel from the town. Political strife and fondness for chicha (homemade corn liquor) contributed to the low level of human existence prevalent in the community.

Because Salcedo was an enthusiastic amateur radio operator, he took three battery sets to a tiny hamlet for the amusement of the peasants. He also showed movies, which had not been known before. By broadcasting the recorded voices of those who participated with him in community improvement activities he gradually influenced members of an apathetic community to work together on self-improvement projects.<sup>17</sup> Gradually he began to use the radio, employing half-literate intermediaries at each receiver, to teach the people to read.

Unesco heard of the project and lent its assistance to devise more effective instructional techniques. By 1955 the first 300,000 copies of a special reader for adult listeners were in use in Sutatenza. By 1956, radio schools had been introduced into Colombian prisons.<sup>18</sup> Finally, in

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<sup>17</sup> Camilo Torres and Berta Corredor, Las Escuelas Radiofónicas de Sutatenza, Bogota: Centro de Investigaciones Sociales, 1961, p. 12.

<sup>18</sup> Pablo M. Ozaeta, "The Radiophonic Schools of Sutatenza, Colombia," in George Bereday and Joseph Lauwers, editors, The Year Book of Education, 1960: Communication Media and The School, Tarrytown-on-Hudson: World Book Company, 1960, p. 558.

1959 ACPO signed a contract with the Colombian government to provide educational services for rural areas. This contract (with an appropriate subsidy) is still renewed annually.<sup>19</sup>

Between 1948 and 1966, ACPO distributed 147,000 radio receivers, 104,102 of which continued in service. More than 22,000 of them were in use as radio schools. ACPO also distributed large quantities of notebooks, pencils, chalk, basketballs, and basketball hoops as part of its program. Most of these supplies were financed by peasant contributions. In addition, the newspaper, El Campesino sold an average of 53,753 copies per week. Another interesting project of ACPO concerns a practical library. Each book is distributed in exchange for an egg or its equivalent in money. One hundred different volumes are projected for publication, 9 of which had been published by 1968.<sup>20</sup>

Radio Instruction. Radio Sutatenza now broadcasts a full daily schedule of information, music, and wholesome advertising, with time set aside each morning and afternoon for literacy classes. Battery transistor radios sell for about twelve dollars each, and a set of five basic textbooks is included in the purchase price. Twenty repair stations throughout the country provide service at a nominal fixed charge of about \$2.50. Programs emanate from seven transmitters -- two double, several shortwave, and the rest local. The sets are designed to receive only the four ACPO frequencies. The local parish priest is usually the key to the success or failure of the radio classes in a given community. Not only is he relied on to encourage

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<sup>19</sup> Hernando Bernal Alarcón et al, What is, What are the Objectives, What does Acción Cultural Popular?, Bogota: Editorial Andes, 1965, pp. 32-33.

<sup>20</sup> Acción Cultural Popular (ACPO), Informe Anual, 1966, Sección Estadística, Bogota: Acción Cultural Popular, Escuelas Radiofónicas, 1967, p. 29.

groups and families to establish radio schools, but he also may stimulate the sale of El Campesino and other reading materials at church.

The teaching program centers around volunteer helpers (auxiliares inmediatos). These individuals possess sufficient literacy to present visually the instructions given by the radio teacher. The auxiliar inmediato is usually a neighbor who knows at least the alphabet and the numbers and who can follow simple and specific instructions in a monitorial fashion. In 1966 there were 22,129 of these helpers, plus 5,191 rural leaders, 742 parish representatives supporting these activities, and a large number of others less directly involved. ACPO also has three leadership institutions which trained 481 rural youth that year to promote the radio school program.<sup>21</sup>

The teaching portion of the program consists of four one-hour broadcasts daily for beginning readers. This amounts to about 2,512 hours of instructional broadcast time per year on various frequencies. The subject content emphasizes five so-called fundamental themes (cinco nociones básicas) -- health, literacy, number, economy and work, and spiritual labor. The first 25 minutes of a typical broadcast stress reading and writing. This is followed by 18 minutes of arithmetic, and the rest of the hour is spent on the other three themes. During the school year, which extends from early February to the end of November, some 200 lessons are taught covering each theme. In 1965, 120,597 students, two-thirds of them over 14 years of age were enrolled in basic literacy courses. Of the 57,537 who took the final tests, 48,900 passed and are now considered literate.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., pp. 10 and 60.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pp. 12-16.

There is also an advanced course which concentrates on such themes as:<sup>23</sup>

- (1) National history, with emphasis on patriotism and the development of desirable moral and social qualities,
- (2) National geography, with particular reference to the identification of new economic and labor opportunities,
- (3) Civics, designed to demonstrate legal and administrative procedures so that the peasant can protect and advance his personal and group interests,
- (4) Manners and deportment, so that the peasant can live and work more effectively with others,
- (5) Improvement of living standards, in the moral, social, and hygienic sense,
- (6) Cooperativism, with emphasis on improving the peasant's material lot through cooperative organization,
- (7) Singing and music, to provide artistic development in the arts, including theater,
- (8) Community living, along with techniques for resolving social problems
- (9) Domestic economy, particularly saving, careful use of material resources, and the wise use of leisure time,
- (10) Sports, to promote healthful and enjoyable living.

In 1965, 120,324 students enrolled in the advanced course, 66,484 took the final test, and 45,977 passed. The radio teaching methods used emphasize a natural, person-to-person approach. In addition, textbooks now favor standard Spanish rather than local usage.

There are really two types of radio schools. One is a community course usually held in the local school building by the auxiliar at a time convenient for village adults. The other is a family radio school held in

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

a private home for a family and its friends. The three training centers prepare organizers who work without pay. Their principal role is to identify in their communities volunteers to organize classes and serve as instructional assistants. To be eligible, a group must consist of eight to ten people and possess a radio receiver and must give some assurance that its attendance will be good. ACPO also conducts short extension courses in community development.

In the beginning course, textbook ideas are designed to foster economic development by redirecting the values of the rural peasant, as the following quoted excerpts illustrate:<sup>24</sup>

- (1) By working together with others, one's living is easily improved.
- (2) Social justice requires that the goods of the earth be distributed better among men.
- (3) Jesus taught us the dignity and nobility of labor.
- (4) If I improve, my town progresses.
- (5) Save to buy useful things that you really need.
- (6) One man can do very little, but several men together can build a road.

While the tenor of these materials is positive, more traditional doctrines, such as the following are sometimes included: "The father in the family rules with the authority God has given him."<sup>25</sup>

The heaviest concentration of radio schools has been in the departments of Boyacá, Cundinamarca, Santander, and Antioquia. This is probably a result of the proximity of these departments to Sutatenza and of the

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<sup>24</sup> Numa Pomplio Mesa G., Cartilla del Alfabeto, Bogota: Escuelas Radiofónicas, 1962 (textbook), pp. 48, 46, 13 and 68.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

strength of devotion in those areas to the Roman Catholic Church. In 1968, radio schools were functioning most intensively on the northern coast of Colombia and the Baranquilla area, but their impact now extends to most of rural Colombia.

In addition to improving the literacy rate, the radio schools have effectively stimulated peasants to build better houses, persuaded them to abandon the practice of housing animals inside their homes, improved sanitation and farming practices, and encouraged wider participation in sports, particularly basketball. In 1965 ACPO reported the construction of 1,073 sports fields and the organization of 691 acting groups and 708 street bands.<sup>26</sup>

The weekly newspaper El Campesino provides useful current information to the small farmer. One survey showed that it is more widely read than any other newspaper in the department of Caquetá. In Antioquia it was second. Among small farmers in six departments, Radio Sutatenza agricultural information programs were the fourth most popular program of their type.<sup>27</sup> In 1966, 3,270 soldiers and 2,697 prisoners in jails throughout the country also were enrolled in ACPO's radio literacy courses.

Financial Support. Every effort is put forth to make the ACPO program as self-sustaining as possible and peasants pay much of its cost. In addition, substantial revenue is derived from advertising in El Campesino, inserts in textbooks, and from radio commercials. ACPO also owns Editorial Andes, a publishing house which also does commercial work, and it owns its own record-pressing facility, which does 70 percent of its business with

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<sup>26</sup>ACPO, Informe Anual . . ., op. cit., p. 84.

<sup>27</sup>Guarnizo, op. cit., pp. 37 and 41.

private customers. In addition, there are donations from Holland, Germany, and other countries, as well as five million pesos from the Ministry of Education budget.

Problems and Criticisms. Through ACPO's teaching, the peasant is gradually being introduced to modern technology in a religious atmosphere, an atmosphere which tends to minimize the tension and social disintegration frequently accompanying such changes. Farmers are beginning to realize that change is possible within their lifetimes; the Catholic Church, through ACPO, is gradually coming to symbolize the rightness of economic and social change. ACPO's influence is more evident, however, in the style of life peasants now lead than in a rise in their economic standard of living.<sup>28</sup> In its first period of development, ACPO's effort was predominantly educational, that is, it did not seek to reform ineffective social structures. Now it demonstrates an understanding of the need to take a clearer stand on matters of social reform.

More and more the need for social change is becoming clear to Colombian peasants. For example, radios are significantly influencing the intellectual quality of rural life. While the pioneering work was done by ACPO, the past six years have witnessed a large influx of low-cost Japanese transistor radios, smuggled in through Venezuela. Because of this, ACPO seems to be losing its pre-eminent hold on the rural airwaves. These cheaper sets have been an obstacle to the sale of ACPO sets because once a peasant has used an ordinary radio, it is hard to get him to buy one with a fixed frequency. Furthermore, it is reported that many peasants have

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<sup>28</sup>Bernal Escobar, op. cit., pp. 230-31.

learned how to alter their fixed-frequency ACP0 sets so that they receive broadcasts from other stations.<sup>29</sup>

Unfortunately, although the radio schools are well-conceived, they are quite dependent upon local priests for their success. Yet many Catholic priests for one reason or another invent little time in promoting this aspect of the church's effort on behalf of education, especially in remoter areas where the need is greatest. The program seems to be the most effective where elementary education is most fully-developed.<sup>30</sup>

Neither have the church's radio schools been very successful in regions where most of the rural population are renters or day workers without their own land. This is probably because land ownership in rural Colombia is a phenomenon associated with a series of mental and emotional activities which make the owner more receptive to the idea that he himself is responsible for his personal progress, and the ACP0 program is not directed to the needs of peasants lacking these primary psychological assets. Nevertheless, ACP0 broadcasts have served to establish the parish priests as the link between small farmer and the national society, thus providing the farmer with a sense of security sorely needed in his isolated situation.<sup>31</sup>

Another important feature of Colombian life is the extensive migration of peasants into urban areas. Wherever the peasant economy is in transition from agricultural employment to crafts or small-scale industry, radio classes are well-received. They are not designed however, to minister to

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<sup>29</sup> Jiménez, op. cit., pp. 72 and 116.

<sup>30</sup> Havens, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>31</sup> Jiménez, op. cit., pp. 264-65.

the needs of the urban poor. Finally, although the radio school activities have grown in both size and effectiveness, they still reach only about one-half of one percent of the rural population.

#### Protestant Education

Protestant education is a small, but growing sector of private education in Colombia. The first Protestants to organize in Colombia did so in 1861 during the regime of General Mosquera. The Presbyterian Colegio Americano was operating successfully in Bogota by the 1870's. Shortly after its founding, similar establishments opened in at least five other Colombian cities. By 1916, about one hundred Protestant schools were reported. In 1925 the Adventists, the Gospel Missionary Society, the Assembly of God, and the Scandinavian Alliance Mission were the most active denominations.<sup>32</sup> Growth continued throughout the 1930's and World War II.

The main elements of the Protestant community merged into the Evangelical Confederation of Colombia (CEDEC), in which some 16 groups maintain 149 schools (primarily elementary), 22 hospitals and clinics, and 13 seminaries and Bible institutes. The Protestant population in Colombia virtually doubled in a recent four-year span -- from 45,405 in 1957 to 90,809 in 1961.

Religious persecution was one aspect of la violencia, especially between 1948 and 1953. In these five years, 42 churches were totally

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<sup>32</sup> Prudencio Damboriena, El Protestantismo en America Latina, Vol. II, Friburg, Switzerland: Oficina Internacional de Investigaciones Sociales de FERES, 1963, pp. 70-71.

destroyed by bombing or burning and 110 elementary schools were closed (54 by government order). Fifty-one Protestants (Evangélicos) were killed because of their religion during the five-year period, 28 of them at the hands of police or government officials.<sup>33</sup> Indications are that conditions have much improved since then.

The United Presbyterian Church of the United States is the oldest and most numerous denomination in Colombia. It enrolls more than 1,000 students in two American colegios in Barranquilla and also maintains elementary and secondary schools in Bogota. The Mennonite Church Board of Missions is working with lepers and is translating parts of the Bible into an Indian language for which an alphabet has been devised. Between 1946 and 1958 the American Bible Society distributed more than a million Bibles or parts of Bibles. The Latin American Mission directs a girls' normal school in Cartagena.<sup>34</sup> The International Baptist Theological Seminary in Cali enrolls about 45 trainees for its mission activities. Many foreign groups with or without a religious affiliation sponsor schools in the larger cities. Many of these institutions are highly regarded by the Colombians for the quality of the instruction they offer -- instruction which is often carried on in a foreign language.

Other Private Schools. Colombia has many other private schools with no particular affiliation. Many of these are elementary schools, while others offer commercial education, and a few even offer the bachillerato. Some of these, such as the Gimnasio Moderno founded by Agustín Nieto

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., pp. 70-72.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pp. 77-79.

Caballero, are of very high quality. Others are not, and many even fail to secure Ministry of Education authorization to operate. In spite of this, there is a strong trend toward establishing new private schools as private business ventures, especially in the larger cities. This can be attributed to two factors -- the high social value placed on private education by most Colombians and the tendency to regard public elementary schools as pauper institutions. Some of the schools become very successful, but many others are doomed to failure. Such schools are relatively easy to establish. Rented facilities, a few qualified teachers, and Ministry approval are all that are required.

In general, private education has played a vital role in Colombia's cities and towns. But while it has helped relieve some of the educational burden assumed by national and departmental governments, its clientele, representing the more influential sectors of Colombian society, is correspondingly less inclined to seek improvement in the quality of the present system of public education. National unity is difficult to achieve when socially segregated schooling is so widely accepted.

## CHAPTER 12

### OTHER PROGRAMS RELATED TO EDUCATION

There are many educational programs and activities which do not fit neatly into conventional categories. Some of these are the responsibility of the Ministry of National Education, while others are conducted by various governmental agencies and private organizations. A survey completed in 1966 indicated that at least 27,700 pupils were receiving instruction outside the formal system of public and private education. Many of these educational activities were associated with quasi-independent government, military, or business organizations. This figure included nearly 1,000 students in secondary education, another 4,000 in technical education, and other fields involving more than 100 different institutions.<sup>1</sup> This chapter will deal with some of these programs which have not been described elsewhere.

Many organs of government other than the Ministry of Education are concerned with education. The Ministry of Justice, through its juvenile division, is concerned with the educational rehabilitation of youths. The Ministry of Government with its division of community action, seeks to stimulate school construction and develop public libraries and recreation centers. Through its division of national territories, and in collaboration with the Catholic Church, it is concerned with the establishment and functioning

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<sup>1</sup>Arango, op. cit., pp. 29-30.

of elementary schools. Its division of Indian affairs provides for literacy and acculturation of Colombian Indians. The Ministry of Public Health promotes public health campaigns, school hygiene and related services, and trains personnel in these fields. Regional lotteries support institutions for maladjusted, defective, and orphaned children, providing some educational facilities.

#### Literacy and Fundamental Education

A modern society cannot function effectively when a high percentage of its citizens cannot read and write. Colombia has progressed from a population 42 percent literate in 1918, to one about 62 percent literate today. The Ministry of Education estimates that about five million adults remain illiterate in a population of more than 19,000,000.<sup>2</sup> In the population over 15 years of age, 29.8 percent in urban areas were illiterate, as compared with 70.2 percent in rural areas. Of course, illiteracy varies considerably from one area to another. For example, only 10.1 percent could not read and write in Bogota, 19.7 percent in the department of Antioquia, and 57.5 percent in the department of Guajira, while on the vacation islands of San Andrés, where English is widely spoken, only 4.6 percent could not read and write.<sup>3</sup>

Despite the burden of a rapidly expanding population, the proportion of the seven-to-fourteen-year age group without elementary schooling has diminished -- from 56.5 percent in 1951 to 39.1 percent in 1964. In general, men are less literate than women because women are more likely to migrate

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<sup>2</sup>Ministerio de Educación, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., Vol. VII, pp. 20-21.

to urban areas to secure work, while boys are more likely to leave school early to help on the farm. Female illiteracy is most common in areas of subsistence agriculture, such as Nariño, Cauca, Boyacá, and Cundinamarca, where girls are as useful in the field as they are in the home, and are therefore less likely to spend their childhood in school. Illiteracy is lowest in the younger age groups. Literates are defined as those who say they can read and write when asked by the census taker. However, the National Department of Statistics defines a literate as one who has completed the third grade.<sup>4</sup>

Underlying causes of illiteracy include the following: (1) The cultural tradition of Latin American countries has been such that education was not considered necessary for the laboring classes. Consequently schools did not exist in many areas, (2) Rapid population growth found governments lacking the necessary economic and human resources to meet the demand for schools. (3) Low standards of living in rural areas obliged families to work to survive. In Colombia, about half the population is rural and geographically isolated from the affluent population centers.

There has been a recent trend to correct these conditions. Law 56 of 1927 established that parents or guardians are required to provide their children with an adequate education, in school or at home, and that each child must take an examination at a school between the ages of 11 and 13 to demonstrate compliance with the law. A 1938 law established rural boarding schools, which were supported by national, departmental, and municipal governments. In 1948, commercial enterprises whose employees had a total of more than 40 children under 16 years of age were required to establish

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<sup>4</sup>Bernal Escobar, op. cit., pp. 104-106.

schools providing elementary education for those children. Decree 41 of 1958 restructured the program, requiring departmental secretariats of education to establish centers of fundamental education. A 1961 decree defined criteria for private adult literacy programs.<sup>5</sup>

The national budget in 1966 assigned the sum of 8,217,940 pesos to literacy and fundamental education, of which 5,000,000 pesos were allocated to the Church's Acción Cultural Popular (ACP0). In addition, national night schools for literacy serve an average of 32,500 adults a year. There are 21 full-time literacy centers -- 12 in Antioquia, 7 in Cundinamarca, and 2 in Bogota.<sup>6</sup> Rural nuclear elementary schools also participate in programs of adult literacy, as does Acción Comunal (a dependency of the Ministry of Government), the Ministry of Health, and the Institute for Agrarian Reform. In 1964 nearly 63,000 persons were served by public and private literacy centers.<sup>7</sup> A typical night literacy program is designed to meet from about 6:00 to 8:00 P.M. five nights per week during the school year. Subject matter, which extends over a two-year period, includes religious and moral education, civics, reading, writing, language arts, mathematics, health education, education for home life, agricultural and industrial education, and recreational skills.

In support of these endeavors, Decree 2059 of 1962 requires students in the fifth and sixth years of secondary education to devote 72 hours to teaching illiterates. This is a good idea, but one somewhat difficult to carry out because in the cities, where there are many secondary students

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<sup>5</sup>Arango, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

<sup>6</sup>Instituto Interamericano de Ciencias Agrícolas, op. cit., pp. 93, 95 and 105-106.

<sup>7</sup>Gómez, Memoria . . ., Vol. IV, op. cit., pp. 28-29.

available, there are relatively few illiterates (or individuals who are willing to admit that they are illiterate), yet in rural areas, where the literacy problem is more acute, there are few secondary students.

Despite these handicaps, the 1962 decree has stimulated a great deal of useful activity. Secondary schools and religious groups have set up their own night schools to help students comply with the law. A great deal of unbounded enthusiasm for learning has been reported from both the illiterates and their student teachers.

One illustration is given by Agustín Nieto Caballero, rector of the Gimnasio Moderno, one of Bogota's best private secondary schools. Every year an official inspector gives a five-week course to students from the Gimnasio and several other schools to prepare them for their teaching duties. The Ministry of Defense provides facilities so that each Saturday morning these students may give instruction to a group of unlettered soldiers, while students who live on the Gimnasio Moderno campus teach illiterate service employees.<sup>8</sup> At the La Picota, a 1,500-inmate penitentiary near Bogota, 150 illiterate prisoners take courses through the fifth year of elementary school which are taught by Ministry of Education teachers and qualified inmate-teachers.<sup>9</sup> In addition, the Laubach organization is active, training and directing Peace Corps volunteers in literacy work, conducting a Lauback training center at the University of Antioquia, and preparing an educational television program to be broadcast in Spanish.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Nieto Caballero, Una Escuela, op. cit., pp. 327-28.

<sup>9</sup> El Siglo, February 2, 1968.

<sup>10</sup> William F. Marquardt and Richard W. Cortright, "Review of Contemporary Research on Literacy and Adult Education in Latin America," Latin American Research Review, 3:56, Nr. 3, Summer, 1968.

The nature of illiteracy in five rural villages has been described in a survey by National University sociology students. Three of the communities studied are located in central Colombia, about an hour's drive from Bogota, and the other two are situated near the Ecuadorian border in southwestern Colombia. All of the communities studied were characterized by extremely small farms operated by subsistence farmers with mixed Indian and Spanish background. Their educational levels were relatively low, and there was little exposure to mass media, with few economic opportunities. Each villager was examined for his functional literacy rate by requiring him to read a six-word sentence in Spanish. Functional literacy in the five villages was 27, 39, and 51 percent in central Colombia, and 24 and 15 percent in southwestern Colombia.<sup>11</sup>

It was found that 19 percent of the illiterates had newspapers, and 6 percent had magazines read to them, frequently by children, who generally had much higher literacy rates than their parents. In fact, the percentage of all homes where the head of the household was illiterate, but where there was at least one literate family member was 52, 59, 84, 76, and 85 percent respectively in the five villages. The researchers found high positive correlation among functional literacy scores, self-defined literacy, and years of formal education. There were, however, some individuals who said they could read a newspaper, but who could not read the six-word literacy test, and vice versa. While numerous functional literates had had less than the Unesco standard of four years of schooling, only one of the functional illiterates had had four or more years of education. It appears

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<sup>11</sup> Everett Rogers and William Herzog, "Functional Literacy among Colombian Peasants," Economic Development and Cultural Change, 14:190-91, January, 1966.

that there had been considerable acquisition of literacy outside of school.<sup>12</sup>

In the Aritama study some years earlier, Reichel Dolmatoff found that although 45.2 percent of all adults had attended school (38.6 percent men and 61.4 percent women), the illiteracy rate there was 79.4 percent for men and 70.6 percent for women. Few people could write more than their names, and fewer still could read a newspaper. Those who were able to read did so very slowly, moving their lips or reading aloud. Many illiterates, however, proudly displayed pencils and fountain pens clipped to their shirt fronts.<sup>13</sup>

Literacy is only one aspect of rural education. Many organizations have been active in attempting by educational means to improve the quality of peasant agricultural practices. One of these is the National Federation of Coffee Growers (Federación Nacional de Cafeteros). In 1958 the Federation established its own extension service, using the educational methods developed by the Ministry of Agriculture. Four years later it invested 11,000,000 pesos in its own program. By 1963 the Federation had involved 51 percent of the municipios in coffee-growing areas in improving the efficiency of coffee production, an enterprise which served nearly 72,000 fincas.<sup>14</sup>

The Federation operates through experimental farms, where coffee farmers can participate in short training courses. It also conducts 26 elementary schools, which in 1963 enrolled 2,100 pupils. In addition to

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp. 197 and 203.

<sup>13</sup> Reichel Dolmatoff, op. cit., pp. 115-116.

<sup>14</sup> Gómez, El Desarrollo Educativo, Vol. II, op. cit., pp. 70-71.

providing literacy education, these schools begin vocational education in agricultural subjects. They also provide further education for about 2,500 adults.<sup>15</sup> Farm credit and success in practical courses often are tied together, and loans are available to persons who have demonstrated in educational programs their ability to use funds wisely. The Banco Cafetero established a credit service to renovate old coffee lands, and made 1,199 loans worth 2,400,000 pesos. The Agrarian Credit Bank, the Institute for the Development of Cotton Production, and the Institute for the Development of Tobacco Production have sponsored similar credit programs, often in conjunction with literacy programs, farm youth clubs, and home improvement groups.<sup>16</sup>

The Colombian Institute of Agrarian Reform (INCORA) has used education to stimulate the formation of cooperatives. Many of these have failed in the past because of mismanagement, poor leadership, or the tendency to expect quick results in five or six months. Now, whenever possible after a cooperative is formed, courses are offered for members, directors, and those in charge of finances, although widespread illiteracy makes teaching effective business management methods difficult. Each cooperative has an education commission, which provides special courses to promote its own organizational growth. Cooperative leaders receive a daily subsidy while they participate in special management training programs sponsored by INCORA and the National Cooperative Movement. In 1967, nine courses in cooperative management of 15 days each for cooperative board members and 22 one-week courses for members and their children were among those offered.

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<sup>15</sup> Zschock, op. cit., p. 117.

<sup>16</sup> Gómez, El Desarrollo Educativo, Vol. II, op. cit., pp. 70-71.

Community Action (Acción Comunal). Decree 1761 of 1959 created a division of community action to stimulate campaigns for the improvement of living standards throughout the country. The Ministry of Government reported that by 1963 more than 4,700 community action committees had been formed. About one-third of their activities consisted of education programs.<sup>17</sup> The organization also provides opportunities for university students wishing to participate in programs of community development.

Education of Indians. The division of Indian affairs in the Ministry of Government has conducted for groups of Indians some eight programs in community development. Each development team includes a sociologist or a lawyer, an agricultural specialist, a home economics worker, and two skilled craftsmen. The Ministry of Government assumes responsibility for the care of Indians who lack money and/or ability to care for themselves. As for education, a 1953 agreement with the Catholic Church placed Indian education in the hands of Catholic mission educators, with missions in complete control of about half the schools and carrying shared responsibility for the rest.

There are boarding schools in Cantrú and Noanamá for the education of Cholo Indian children and in San Luis del Chascal for the Tunebos. For female Indians in the Vaupés comisaría, there are schools in 13 communities. The division of Indian affairs operates day and evening literacy schools for Indians, as well as courses in carpentry, shoemaking, masonry, and other skills. In addition, the National Apprenticeship Service has given scholarships to Indian students to improve their grasp of skills needed in industry and the trades. Unfortunately, however, educational programs

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<sup>17</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., pp. 224-25.

for Indians often have been poorly financed and thus extremely poor in quality, in spite of the fact that many individuals have worked and are working enthusiastically to insure their success.<sup>18</sup>

### Educational Television

Colombia is uniquely situated for educational television. It has a government-owned network built to United States technical standards, with the world's longest microwave relay -- of 240 miles between two peaks of the Andes. This network places 85 percent of the population and 94 percent of the schools within range of a transmitter.<sup>19</sup>

Colombia also has a national language which is used by almost everyone, an established system of public elementary schools, a national syllabus which all teachers are expected to follow, and a national television network which, prior to educational television, was used only a few hours in the evening for commercial telecasting.

In 1967, 486,144 students in the public schools were taking classes by educational television. Over a hundred Peace Corps broadcast utilization volunteers, along with a smaller number of Colombian technicians, were serving in seven departments and in Bogota. In 1966, 9 of the 16 courses televised during the year were handled by Colombian producer-directors. By early 1968, all but one were produced and directed by Colombians. There were about 800 receivers distributed by the government and about an equal

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<sup>18</sup> Gómez, El Desarrollo Educativo, Vol. 11, op. cit., pp. 57, 58 and 68.

<sup>19</sup> John R. Winnie, "Peace Corps ETV Project in Colombia," Audiovisual Instruction, 10:27, January, 1965.

number provided for by an Agency for International Development grant of \$575,000.<sup>20</sup>

Although there had been earlier attempts to employ television for educational purposes, the first large-scale effort to use it began in 1964 as a Peace Corps project. Within three years of its inception, the program was functioning in about 1,250 schools and it has since expanded. Educational television is now a part of the government-supervised but semi-autonomous National Institute of Radio and Television. This organization also runs the commercial network.

The usual teaching arrangement is to place a receiver in a particular classroom in each school. Classes then enter to watch the telecast for their grade at the appointed time. Because so many schools do not have electricity, the program tends to function only in somewhat better-than-average schools. Since Peace Corps Volunteers spend much of their time shaping the school's activities around the telecasting curriculum, the effective utilization of the medium depends directly upon the number of Volunteers or Colombian counterparts available. Initially, the educational inexperience of many Volunteers limited their usefulness, but this difficulty has since been overcome. Beginning in 1965, short Saturday morning courses were also offered to in-service teachers.<sup>21</sup>

Instruction. The telecasts were not limited merely to enrichment. They delivered instead the "core" instruction for each course. During 1965,

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<sup>20</sup> Jack Lyle et al., "Colombia's National Programme for Primary-Level Television Instruction," in Unesco, New Education Media in Action: Case Studies for Planners II, Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning, 1967, p. 69.

<sup>21</sup> Comstock and Maccoby, op. cit., The Project as a Whole -- Organization, Expansion and Adaptation, Research Report Nr. 1, pp. 18, 24 and 66.

15 courses were broadcast, each consisting of two 15-minute telecasts weekly. For each of these, the classroom teacher was expected to provide 30 minutes of supplementary instruction -- 15 minutes before as motivation, and 15 minutes afterwards as follow-up. Teacher guides were published in advance. This meant, for example, that a typical fifth grade teacher would have to prepare for six 15-minute telecasts each week. For most teachers, preparing instruction in advance was a completely new procedure, as was the task of building instruction around an already prepared core. The most difficult aspect of the whole situation for many teachers was the de-emphasizing of memorization and recitation and the substituting of techniques designed to encourage independent thinking. To most teachers, memorization and learning are synonymous, and discipline and acceptance, not independent thinking, is the desired student behavior. When a teacher does use a motivation and follow-up technique with a telecast, she is inclined to use those methods with which she is already most familiar.<sup>22</sup>

The telecasts are based on the premise that a core of information presented by highly competent studio teachers would greatly enhance the quality of classroom instruction and would be infinitely better than merely supplementing the instruction of poorly prepared teachers. The intent was to expand the contribution of the better teachers, to compensate for the deficiencies of the poorer ones, and to make classes more exciting. There was widespread agreement that one of the most effective contributions of the whole project was the improvement in the knowledge and competence of the classroom teachers.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Comstock and Maccoby, op. cit., Improving the Effectiveness of Peace Corps Efforts to Change Teacher Behavior, Research Report Nr. 7, pp. 3-4.

<sup>23</sup> Lyle, op. cit., p. 75. . . .

Curriculum. Television course offerings included mathematics for grades 1 to 5, social studies for grades 3 to 5, natural sciences for grades 3 to 5, and language arts for grades 1 and 2. Many other courses were added as soon as effective Colombian television teachers could be found and program schedules arranged. Modern mathematics was introduced by a Ministry of Education directive. English, French, music, and other subjects also were offered. A sample schedule for Friday, February 9, 1968, follows:

8:00 English  
8:15 Mathematics V - Properties of Modulative Multiplication  
8:40 Language II - I Make My Dictionary  
9:05 Language I - We Play with Lines  
10:10 Natural Science II - The Sense of Touch  
10:35 Natural Science IV - The Soil and its Relation to Materials of Construction  
2:10 Social Studies IV - General and Specific Characteristics of the Atlantic Coast  
2:35 Music I - The Holiday Drum  
3:30 Language II - I Make My Dictionary (re-broadcast)  
3:55 Language I - We Play with Lines (re-broadcast)

Other days of the week gave a greater emphasis to mathematics. Percussion bands, inspired by the television teachers and using tin cans, scrap lumber, and nails as components of instruments, have been developed in many first grades.

Problems. As might be expected, telecasts have been plagued with technical problems. Coordination of schedules and communication with schools often is difficult. Programs have been broadcast at the wrong hours, and some lessons have been poorly conceived. Many of these problems have been resolved simply with additional experience on the part of the

personnel involved. Some skeptics contend that learning is effective only when there is some direct, personal contact between teacher and learner. Nevertheless, most critics agree that television instruction has served to make the presentation of information more effective.

### Physical Education

Physical education is mandatory in both elementary and secondary schools. Although three hours per week theoretically have been required since 1967, in practice two hours are more common. On the secondary level the program ranges in emphasis from 60 percent gymnastics in the first two years to 30 percent in the sixth year. Another 20 percent of each course is designated for evaluation, and the remainder consists of sports and similar activities.<sup>24</sup> Basketball is a favorite sport because it can be played in a limited area within an enclosed patio. Balls and hoops are costly, however, and as luxury items are subject to a high import tax.

Teachers of physical education are very scarce, with an average of only 13 graduates being prepared annually. In 1968 there were 380 teachers of physical education, of whom only 168 held degrees in the field. These were assisted by 50 Peace Corps volunteers who served in secondary and normal schools.

University students are required to take one year of physical education at the University del Valle and the Industrial University of Santander. All the other universities must offer the course, but students are not required to take it.

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<sup>24</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Programa de Educación Física para Enseñanza Media, op. cit., preface.

Athletic contests between schools are rare unless two universities happen to be situated within the same city. There are few recreational or sports activities either during or after the university years in which the student may participate with any degree of regularity, although soccer, bicycle racing, and track are popular sports in some circles.<sup>25</sup> Several universities have recently constructed facilities for tennis, basketball, volleyball, and baseball.

#### Education for the Handicapped

Education and care for the physically and mentally handicapped is not highly developed in Colombia, despite the fact that la violencia over the last two decades has greatly increased the need for such services. One reason for this is that it has been impossible to provide educational facilities even for normal children. A movement is now afoot to provide special help and training for children who are physically or mentally handicapped, but the initiative rests primarily in private hands, with only limited financial aid available from the government.<sup>26</sup>

In 1964 there were nine special education institutions employing 139 teachers and enrolling 1,172 students.<sup>27</sup> More than half the students who receive special training are in private institutions. Legislation was enacted in 1940 which established the National Federation of the Blind and

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<sup>25</sup> Tom LaBelle, "Peace Corps in Colombia," Journal of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, 37:58-59, November, 1966.

<sup>26</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 32.

<sup>27</sup> Instituto Interamericano de Estadística, op. cit., p. 203.

Deaf. This organization plans, conducts, and develops services for persons with these handicaps. More than 14 schools or organizations serve the blind in Colombia, five of which are located in Bogota. The Colombian Institute for the Blind and Deaf at Bogota, offering elementary education and providing vocational training for those not planning to enter a profession, is supported by government grants and funds derived from investments. A Catholic institute provides secondary and some vocational education for blind and deaf girls.<sup>28</sup>

The Franklin D. Roosevelt Institute, a center for crippled children ranging from infancy to age 15, was founded in 1947. It has a capacity for about 250 in-patients, with surgical facilities and a brace shop, in addition to an educational program. By 1955, the Institute had provided services for more than 2,000 severely handicapped children, but in that same year, a severe poliomyelitis epidemic resulted in a waiting list of 5,000 children seeking admission. Services at the Institute usually are provided without charge, 60 percent of its budget coming from the government and the remainder from private contributions.<sup>29</sup>

Vacation Colonies. Children frequently suffer from physical and nutritional deficiencies which can be corrected simply by several weeks or months of proper care. Colombia's school colonies to help such children have been in operation for several decades. In the mid-1960's, 2,400 pupils attended 11 such facilities. A similar program provides meals at school to

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<sup>28</sup> Eugene Wesley Friesen, Nature and Determinants of Attitudes toward Education and toward Physically Disabled Persons in Colombia, Peru and the United States (Dissertation), East Lansing, Michigan State University, 1966, pp. 63-64.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 63.

needy and undernourished pupils. Three-tenths of one percent of all elementary school children received such aid in 1961.<sup>30</sup>

### General Culture

Educational progress is not limited to formal schooling. There are many governmental and private organizations which contribute in other ways to the general cultural development of the nation.

Division of Cultural Extension (Divulgación Cultural). This division of the Ministry of National Education was established in 1960. Its sections include popular culture, publications, fine arts, the National Symphony Orchestra, the National Band, and a theater of popular culture. Several of the departmental governments also have sections devoted to cultural extension work.

In addition to the responsibilities of the Division of Cultural Extension, the Ministry of National Education has a number of other cultural dependencies having varying degrees of autonomy. These include the National Museum, the National Library, the Jorge Eliecer Gaitán Museum, the Museum of Colonial Art, the National School of Dramatic Art, the Columbus Theater (Teatro Colón), the Colombian Institute of Anthropology, the Caro y Cuero Institute, the National Archives, and the Electronic Institute of Languages. There are also many others, but they are less clearly educational in nature.

In actual practice, the Division of Cultural Extension has only a small budget; consequently it plays a very limited role in education. It

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<sup>30</sup> Bernal Escobar, op. cit., pp. 219-20.

seeks to encourage and collaborate on worthwhile cultural and artistic endeavors. It may issue 50 posters when some worthy cultural event comes to town and it has the power to suspend the tax which the sponsors of these culturally desirable spectacles might otherwise have to pay. The Division also seeks private funds for worthwhile projects and promotes in every way possible artistic and cultural matters related to the traditions and aspirations of the people of Colombia. The disparate nature of its concerns, however, has made it very difficult for the Division to establish an integrated effort or a clear criterion as to what is cultural. But it does serve as a useful center where people with ideas and concerns in these areas can receive encouragement and assistance.

The National Library. The origins of the National Library in Bogota go back to the year 1777, when the Royal Library of Santa Fé was opened to the public. The National Library is a dependency of the Ministry of Education and has the largest collection of books, microfilms, and music in the country. Its collections in 1963 totaled 253,000 volumes.<sup>31</sup> In 1961 30 small, poorly-equipped regional libraries which were once regarded as part of the National Library became dependencies of the Library Services Section of the Ministry of Education. This section is also in charge of ten other public libraries. A survey of Colombian libraries provides the following information:

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<sup>31</sup> Instituto Interamericano de Estadística, op. cit., p. 225.

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Library Facilities (1964)<sup>32</sup>

<u>Type of Library</u>	<u>No. of Libraries</u>	<u>No. of Books</u>	<u>No. of Works Consulted Annually</u>
School	414	620,475	1,314,805
University	80	769,750	1,036,439
Public	130	486,993	2,554,083

In addition there are 545 "informal libraries" in the nation, with a total of 2,012,120 books and 2,961,476 readers.<sup>33</sup>

Besides the National Library, other large libraries in Colombia include the Luis Angel Arango Library of the Banco de la República, the Javeriana University library in Bogota, the General Library of the University of Antioquia in Medellin, and the Public Pilot Library of Medellin for Latin America, which is under the auspices of Unesco. Many university libraries seem small because there is no central collection of books. Each faculty has its own library.

Scholarly Associations. Eight national and regional academies receive assistance as affiliates of the Ministry of Education. The largest subsidies have been granted to the Colombian Academy, an academy corresponding to the Royal Spanish Academy (of the Spanish language) in Madrid and

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<sup>32</sup>Asociación Colombiana de Bibliotecarios, "Las Bibliotecas en la Educación Colombiana," Boletín de la Asociación Colombiana de Bibliotecarios, 10:16, January-December, 1966. Information based on 1963 data in América en Cifras reports 87 university libraries with 926,000 volumes and 48 specialized libraries with 223,000 volumes, three of which are of an administrative nature. To the figures just cited should be added the collection of the National Library. All other data seem consistent.

<sup>33</sup>Gómez, Memoria . . ., Vol. I, op. cit., pp. 74-75.

the Colombian Academy of History. Academies in the physical sciences, medicine, and law also receive some assistance. The Caro y Cuervo Institute is well known for its scholarship in linguistics, cultural history, philology, and bibliography.

Museums. The Division of Cultural Extension reported that there were 31 museums in Colombia in 1964, 21 of which were devoted to history and art. The Ministry of Education aided five of these, with the greatest support going to the National Museum of Colonial Art in Bogota.

Performing Arts. National and foreign theatrical and musical performances are sponsored by the Division of Cultural Extension in the Teatro Colón. Foreign groups are exempt from taxes and are granted the use of the theater at a nominal fee of 10 percent of the admission receipts. The national government has given financial assistance to the Experimental Theater of Cali on condition that it gives 10 free performances in other cities.<sup>34</sup> One difficulty in the development of a national theater is that actors are often taken by the public to represent particular political positions in the roles they play, and sanctions have sometimes been taken against them. As a consequence, there is a tendency to avoid innovative plays or plays on national themes which might provoke undue controversy. The government also sponsored a national art contest in 1967 and employed foreign judges to evaluate the works. The National Museum has about 20 art exhibitions a year.

Motion Pictures. In order to discourage the negative educational values implicit in many films, a National Committee of Censorship was authorized in 1955. This led five years later not only to a national

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pp. 66-67.

committee for the classification of films intended for public exhibition, but also to the designation of a committee of five people who vote on the suitability of each film. Four categories are used: Category A -- suitable for the general public, Category B -- suitable for those over 14, Category C -- suitable for those over 18, and Category D -- suitable for those over 21.<sup>35</sup> Some 72 unsalaried inspectors in Bogota, along with five others in smaller towns, regularly make spot checks of films to determine if under-age youth are in attendance. The censor's job is to evaluate films and agree upon age limits which apply to the more than 800 public motion picture theaters in the nation.

Press and Broadcasting. A survey of the 388 periodicals published in Colombia in 1965 noted that 75 of these emphasized news and information, 49 scientific matters, 41 economic topics, 37 political affairs, and 27 religious topics. An average 1,979,714 copies of daily newspapers were published regularly. Another 1,209,025 copies of newspapers were published weekly, and about 1,500,000 were issued less frequently.<sup>36</sup> Some of the larger Bogota dailies such as El Tiempo and El Espectador boast circulations of nearly 200,000.

The nation had 220 radio and 14 television stations at the end of 1964. At the same time, there were approximately 183 radio and 17 television receivers for every one thousand people.

A study of Colombian cultural activities for March, 1967, revealed that there were 22 art exhibits -- 13 in Bogota, 3 in Cartagena, and the

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<sup>35</sup>Decree 0306 of 1960.

<sup>36</sup>Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (DANE), Informe al Congreso Nacional, Bogota: Multolith Estadinal, 1967, p. 53.

rest in five other cities or communities. There were 77 lectures and poetry recitals -- 65 in Bogota and 4 in Medellin. Of 42 music recitals, 20 were in Bogota and 12 in Medellin. Fifteen of the 21 books published that month were published in Bogota, and all but one of the rest were published in Medellin. In the theater, 56 of the 65 performances were presented in Bogota, followed by 4 and 3 in Medellin and Sáchica respectively. Of all the cultural events for the month, 74 percent took place in Bogota, 12 percent in Medellin, and 3 percent in Cali.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Feran Torres León, "Estadísticas Culturales de Colombia," Boletín Cultural y Bibliográfico, 10:742-43, Nr. 3, 1967.

## CHAPTER 13

### INTERNATIONAL AND FOREIGN EDUCATIONAL INFLUENCES

There are many foreign influences in Colombian life. This is because Colombia has long been dependent upon the sale of agricultural commodities to western Europe and the United States. This interdependence with the rest of the world has made her educated citizens conscious of the influence that foreign countries have had upon her national development. Automobiles, radios, refrigeration equipment, and a host of industrial products of foreign origin have long been an important feature of Colombian life. As a developing nation, Colombia has been particularly interested in techniques and attitudes of the industrial nations. The cultural prestige of Western Europe and the political influence of the United States in world affairs has further contributed to Colombian interest in foreign institutions and ideas. Not only does proficiency in English or French confer important social status, but it is also useful in obtaining access to some of the better job opportunities in foreign businesses in Colombia. The Colombian student who has studied abroad often has access to the most prestigious professional and social circles when he returns to his own country. Little wonder then that educated Colombians have an intense interest in institutions in their own country which help them to understand the foreign milieu.

Colombian Institute for Advanced Training Abroad (ICETEX). The Colombian Institute for Advanced Training Abroad was one of Latin America's first examples

of an underdeveloped nation seeking systematically to encourage its citizens to acquire definite skills from the more industrially developed nations of the world. Until ICETEX was founded in the 1950's, most of the positions of leadership and responsibility in Colombia were limited to the economically privileged group with access to higher education. Foreign study opportunities were neither regulated nor organized, and in most instances scholarships for study abroad were awarded solely on the basis of the applicant's political influence and in areas of study which often had no relationship to any national need.<sup>1</sup> ICETEX set out to replace favoritism and political influence in student selection with ability and personal merit. Scholarships were replaced by loans, on the theory that the benefit a student gains from his education abroad is commensurate with the capital invested.<sup>2</sup>

Background. ICETEX was conceived in 1943 as a master's thesis at Syracuse University in New York by Gabriel Betancur Mejía. It was recommended in 1948 to President Mariano Ospina Pérez by the National Committee on Economic Affairs. The organization began functioning in 1952 under the leadership of Dr. Betancur, who later also served two terms as Minister of Education.

The agency's program evolved in the following stages:<sup>3</sup>

1954: ICETEX first sought private funds in support of its administrative expenses. By 1966, private funds constituted 40 percent of the Institute's support.

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<sup>1</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, La Educación . . . , op. cit., p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Instituto Colombiano de Especialización Técnica en el Exterior, ICETEX, A Tool for the Over-all Development of Colombia, Bogota; Imprenta Nacional, 1966, pp. 13-14.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 15 and 16.

About 20 percent is provided by the Colombian government and the remainder is derived from a fee for services.

1955: ICETEX granted the first loans for study at Colombian universities.

1956: ICETEX was granted the power to authorize the purchase of foreign currency at favorable official rates for use by Colombian students abroad, thus reducing their study costs.

1958: To make more efficient use of various scholarships granted by foreign donors, ICETEX began a clearing house to identify opportunities and recommend applicants. In 1959 a similar program was begun for foreigners seeking to study in Colombia. In 1960 it began coordinating international student travel programs to Colombia.

1962: ICETEX undertook Colombia's first comprehensive study of manpower needs.

1963: ICETEX instituted a program by which Colombian commercial banks granted loans for study in Colombia to students approved by ICETEX.

1964: ICETEX helped to establish similar organizations in Panama and the Dominican Republic. Venezuela and Peru developed parallel programs in 1965. Educational exchange programs have been developed with the state of Florida and other United States university consortia.

1965: The College Entrance Examination Board initiated a technical assistance program to help ICETEX improve its selection of students receiving loans and scholarships and to identify institutions in the United States appropriate for particular areas of study.

As the foregoing facts indicate, ICETEX has varied its role to meet changing conditions. The number of beneficiaries of foreign study assistance declined after 1961 as a result of national economic difficulties. The increased availability of foreign-trained Colombians and the development of Colombian facilities in some technical fields also has changed the emphasis of some of ICETEX's activities. The last decade has contributed

new kinds of support which have led to greater emphasis on loans, rather than scholarships. Both public and private universities, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Mining, the National Federation of Coffee Growers, and others have entrusted ICETEX with the administration of some 72 loan funds.

By 1964, after 12 years of existence, ICETEX had contributed in a variety of ways to the advanced training of 16,222 students. In 1964, for example, its help included aid to 1,433 students in the form of currency exchange subsidies, to 153 students in the form of loans for study abroad, to 246 students by administering scholarships granted by foreign donors, and to 653 students who received loans for study in Colombia.<sup>4</sup>

Current Policies and Activities. Since its inception, about 26 percent of all Colombians with higher education have been assisted in some way by ICETEX. Its present activities seek to:<sup>5</sup>

- (1) Grant low-interest loans to Colombian students of high personal merit, ability, and economic need for either post-graduate study abroad, for technical studies abroad of less than three years duration, or, in exceptional cases, for the completion abroad of university studies begun in a foreign country by a student at his own expense.
- (2) Grant interest-free loans to Colombian students for university and graduate studies in Colombia.
- (3) Receive and publicize all foreign scholarship offers and pre-select qualified candidates.
- (4) Help to place students returning from advanced study abroad in suitable occupations.
- (5) Help choose appropriate schools for students going abroad for advanced studies.

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<sup>4</sup> ICETEX, ICETEX, A Tool . . ., op. cit., p. 37.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 17-18.

- (6) Supervise the academic progress of students financed by ICETEX.
- (7) Collaborate with government and private industry in sending personnel abroad for specialized training.
- (8) Orient foreigners coming to study in Colombia concerning scholarships.
- (9) Administer funds or approve bank loans to students studying in Colombian universities.
- (10) Award government scholarships for study abroad.
- (11) Reduce red tape and authorize currency exchange at the cheaper official rate for Colombians studying abroad.

Loans. Loans for study abroad are of three major types: (1) full, for students with no economic resources whatsoever, (2) partial, for those who can afford to pay part of their expenses, and (3) supplementary, for needy students who have been awarded scholarships deemed insufficient to cover all necessary expenses. These policies evolved from a 1955 decree establishing maintenance scholarships, which were converted in 1963 to a revolving loan fund for students in university-level institutions. Loans are granted for the academic year, and monthly checks are issued after submission of proof of class attendance. Students with grades averaging at least 70 percent may renew the loan each year until graduation, and repayment begins one year after graduation. Loans are available for post-graduate study up to 400 pesos monthly for university students, 1,000 pesos for unmarried professionals, and 1,500 pesos for married professionals -- plus books and equipment. The interest rate is 2 percent per year, with an 8 percent penalty for late payment.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> ICETEX, Información e Instrucciones sobre Préstamos para Estudios Universitarios y de Especialización en Centros Docentes de Colombia, Bogota: 1968, pp. 2, 3, and 8.

Twelve banks have become affiliated with ICETEX since 1964, and some 50,000,000 pesos have been loaned to students. In 1968 ICETEX created a fund of guarantees to support loan applicants with limited credit. Organizations which have made some of the largest contributions to the loan fund include the National University, the University of Los Andes, the Ministry of Mining, Ecopetrol, and the National Federation of Coffee Growers.<sup>7</sup>

Favorable Exchange Rates. Purchase of dollars at the official rate of exchange is more advantageous than buying them on the free market. In general, this concession is made for studies which cannot be carried out adequately in Colombia. By 1964, 47 percent of the 3,022 students helped by ICETEX had been beneficiaries of this service. A student deposit system also allows a student's family to open an account with ICETEX in which the family makes regular deposits in pesos during his period of study abroad. ICETEX then sends money orders to the student in dollars.<sup>8</sup> Dollars for undergraduate study abroad have not been authorized since 1967, except for junior college terminal courses and for graduate study in certain fields not yet well-developed in Colombia.

Other Assistance. A fellowship program was established in 1960 to finance the advanced training of Colombian university professors and administrators. The Colombian Association of Universities and ICETEX choose appropriate foreign universities. Individual universities then finance 30 percent of the training of staff members. The remaining 70 percent may be obtained by a loan from a joint fund, to be repaid in 10

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<sup>7</sup> ICETEX, ICETEX, A Tool . . ., op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

years. Beneficiaries are required to serve their sponsoring university for a period twice as long as the duration of their studies.

The Colombian government offers cultural exchange graduate-level scholarships which are administered by ICETEX to professors from other Latin American countries and to citizens of countries which offer scholarships to Colombia. Nineteen such scholarships were granted in 1964.<sup>9</sup> ICETEX also administers most of the other grants involving foreign training, such as a project in 1968 to train 60 secondary teachers in various technical fields for the new institutes of secondary education.

ICETEX has performed a commendable service in placing highly-qualified Colombians in closer contact with the educational services available in other parts of the world, as well as in making it possible for able Colombians to continue higher education in their own country. There exists a need, however, to adjust its services more closely to the country's more urgent priorities and to establish better channels of communications with organizations which utilize the services of those whose training it supervises.<sup>10</sup>

#### Brain Drain

Closely related to Colombia's need for better-trained persons is the tendency for many well-qualified Colombians to migrate to other countries because of the difficulty in securing in their own country employment suited to their skill and ability. In 1965, for example, 868 Colombian

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 24 and 27.

<sup>10</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Educación, La Educación . . . , op. cit., pp. 43-44.

professionals and technicians received immigrant visas to the United States -- a pattern that has continued for some years.<sup>11</sup> Colombian surgeon Nelson Giraldo Nonsalve, named by the University of Utah as its "Scientist of the Year," in an open letter to President Lleras Restrepo pointed out, among other things, that "group intrigues, and the lack of an 'in' with a politically influential person, [and] lack of an affiliation with the right political or religious groups" are important obstacles influencing young professionals to leave their native country.<sup>12</sup>

Colombian leaders are deeply concerned with this problem, and a report by Arias Osorio<sup>13</sup> identifies some of its fundamental causes:

In Colombian higher education, he explains, many of the ideas and textbooks are foreign. This produces Colombians who feel intellectually more at home in a foreign culture than in their own. Many spend an additional year or two abroad taking advanced training, and when they return, their maladaptation to their native country is virtually complete.

Another characteristic of Colombia, as in many underdeveloped countries, is its inability to absorb the talents of many well-qualified persons. Many private businesses prefer low-cost employees trained on the job, even in responsible managerial positions. Government departments often lack suitable positions or technical equipment for highly trained university graduates. Research facilities and teaching opportunities in universities also are limited. Although ICETEX and SENA have identified needs in the

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>12</sup> El Tiempo, January 23, 1968.

<sup>13</sup> Eduardo Arias Osorio, "La Emigración de Profesionales Colombianos: Análisis de sus Causas y Posibles Soluciones," Crónica Universitaria, 3: 29-40, Nr. 5, 1967.

various occupational fields, national policymakers have not given sufficient support to the development of a national plan. The majority of professional careers in Colombia are new, and consequently high standards are generally lacking. As a result, poorly-trained individuals hinder the well-prepared from securing adequate employment. In addition, many professions are conducted in a commercial rather than in a professional spirit; in fact, in some cases, laws supporting good professional practices are not respected.

Foreign employment often provides salaries several times higher than equivalent work in Colombia. Other factors which encourage Colombians to work abroad are the nationalization of many private industries, the limited job opportunities with foreign firms in Colombia, and the low status of some of the newer careers in Colombia. All too frequently, the university experience does not instill a vision of service, either toward the profession or toward the country. Under such circumstances, one's country becomes that place where the pay is best. Education on the higher levels is, in effect, denationalized, and the student usually feels little obligation to serve his country. At the same time, professionals who find excessive commercialism distasteful are less hesitant to migrate to societies where altruistic service is expected.<sup>14</sup>

Corrective Measures. There are a number of ways to reduce the exodus of trained professionals. These include: legislation which grants greater recognition to scientific excellence similar to that provided in France, better conditions of employment, and reduction of tariff rates on scientific

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 30, 33 and 35.

equipment which would facilitate professionals in functioning more effectively. In addition, study abroad should be carefully limited to those specialties most needed at home, with careful control of duration and country of study. For those already trained, a national employment service and university employment services would improve placement. Minimum work experience of at least one year should be required before university egresados are permitted to leave the country.<sup>15</sup>

#### Study Abroad

In June, 1968, 5,001 Colombian students were enrolled in schools in 37 foreign countries.<sup>16</sup> The top fifteen countries are listed in Table 20. Large numbers of military officers were trained abroad between 1950 and 1966; 1,739 of these were trained in the United States, and 1,394 in other foreign countries.<sup>17</sup>

Of a total of 49,319 university students in Colombia in 1966,<sup>18</sup> 877 were foreigners. Of these, 309 were from other South American countries, 227 from Central America and Mexico, 86 from the United States and Canada, 232 from Europe, 18 from Asia, and 5 from Africa and Oceania.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 36-37.

<sup>16</sup> Letter from ICETEX, September, 1968.

<sup>17</sup> Robert P. Case, "El Entrenamiento de Militares Latino Americanos en los Estados Unidos," Aportes (Paris), p. 55, Nr. 6, October 1967.

<sup>18</sup> The total number of university students may be calculated in various ways. Another figure given for 1966 is 52,117, which includes enrollments in post-secondary institutions, some of which admit students with only four of the six years of secondary school.

<sup>19</sup> Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Estadísticas . . . , op. cit., p. 23.

TABLE 20  
COLOMBIAN STUDENTS IN FIFTEEN COUNTRIES<sup>20</sup>  
June, 1968

Country	Totals	Agriculture & Rel. Fields	Fine Arts	Physical Sciences	Natural Sciences	Social Sciences	Humanities	Education	Engineering	Medical Sciences	Technical Careers	Other Fields	Lang. Prior to Specialization	2nd Study to Specialization	Secondary Education	Elementary Education
United States	2,179	126	25	183	48	7	43	15	26	57	106	454	207	60	59	202
Spain	642	19	25	37	8	12	30	13	24	34	14	34	244	32	10	12
Italy	366	16	37	40	3	24	1	23	1	76	31	38	11	35	4	3
Germany	321	12	8	40	3	24	1	23	1	34	18	13	14	10	9	15
Mexico	263	11	3	24	20	24	55	9	27	29	21	29	14	8	6	4
France	249	3	10	15	15	58	3	6	8	13	7	23	7	5	1	-
England	200	7	10	15	15	58	3	6	8	13	7	23	5	43	9	-
Belgium	118	7	5	9	2	2	1	2	1	6	7	1	7	1	1	-
Ecuador	94	12	1	7	1	1	1	1	1	16	2	1	7	4	3	1
Brazil	78	10	7	7	1	1	1	1	1	16	8	4	5	37	2	13
Argentina	75	7	1	1	2	2	4	1	1	16	2	1	5	10	2	1
Canada	59	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	2	3	32	1	1
Chile	49	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	3	4	3	1
Puerto Rico	38	15	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	8	5	10	1
Austria	37	2	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	-

20 Letter from ICETEX, September 1968.

### Foreign Schools

Nearly a century ago the first Colegio Americano was founded in Bogota as a project of the Presbyterian Church. Schools such as this have provided an alternative to the traditional educational system and often are popular with the affluent classes. Still others are oriented toward the urban middle and lower classes and some have encouraged the development of coeducation, a practice which until recently has been discouraged by the government because of the negative view of the Catholic Church. The best known schools are the following:

#### Foreign Schools in Colombia<sup>21</sup>

<u>Schools Sponsored by Americans</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Enrollment 1965-1966</u>	<u>Language of Instruction</u>
Colegio Nueva Granada	Bogota	1,000	English
Colegio Bolívar	Calli	614	English
Colegio Karl C. Parrish	Barranquilla	516	English
Escuela Jorge Washington	Cartagena	265	English
Columbus School	Medellin	451	English

<u>Other Foreign Schools</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Estimated Enrollment</u>	<u>Language of Instruction</u>
Colegio Andino	Bogota	1,000	German
Liceo Frances Louis Pasteur	Bogota	1,000	French
Colegio Anglo-Colombiano	Bogota	600	Spanish
Colegio San Carlos	Bogota	350	English & Spanish
Colegio San Viator	Bogota	500	English & Spanish
Colegio Calasanz	Bogota	520	Spanish
Colegio Marymount	Bogota	230	Spanish
Colegio Emanuel D'Alzon	Bogota	350	Spanish
Colegio Helvetia	Bogota	300	Spanish
Colegio Leonardo DaVinci	Bogota	150	Spanish

#### Foreign Assistance to Colombian Education

Assistance to Colombian education has been provided by many foreign countries, sometimes in the form of grants or loans, and sometimes with

<sup>21</sup> Letter from the Cultural Affairs Division, U. S. Embassy, Bogota.

more complex arrangements, such as the provision of technical experts and training programs in Colombia and in the donor nation.

Some of the major sources of financial and technical aid in recent years from abroad are indicated below:

**Technical and Financial Aid to Education  
from Abroad, 1960-1967<sup>22</sup>**

<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Contribution in U. S. Dollars</u>
Agency for International Development	8,391,000
Ford Foundation	7,655,900
Rockefeller Foundation	5,116,769
Kellogg Foundation	5,724,079
International Development Bank	15,600,000
Special Fund of the United Nations	3,423,200
Unesco	<u>2,138,700</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48,049,648</b>

Much of this aid from foreign sources has been granted directly to universities:

**Foreign Aid to Colombian Universities, 1960-1967<sup>23</sup>**

<u>University</u>	<u>Aid in U. S. Dollars</u>
National University	9,361,700
Javeriana University	601,000
University del Valle	6,272,940
University of Antioquia	6,971,495
University of Los Andes	3,087,710
Industrial University of Santander	1,687,700
University of Caldas	<u>40,000</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28,022,545</b>

In addition to the above, a project of the Ministry of Education sought to borrow 12,000,000 U. S. dollars from the World Bank to finance 19 institutes

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<sup>22</sup> Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Proyecto de Educación Media, Vol. II., op. cit., p. 7. This includes some programs authorized but not yet completed. Some of those listed are loans while others are grants. Not all are dedicated exclusively to education.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

of secondary education, 7,600,000 dollars of which was granted in 1968. Much of the assistance provided with United States funds has been made available under contract with American universities. Tulane University of New Orleans, for example, has participated in a cooperative project to develop medical education, and the University of Pennsylvania has assisted the medical faculty at Javeriana University. Michigan State, the University of California, the University of Florida, and many other American institutions have collaborated in Colombian educational efforts.

The Ministry of Education signed a contract in 1961 with the United States Agency for International Development in which a United States grant contributed 3,540,000 dollars for constructing and equipping elementary and normal schools and providing teaching materials and teacher training. The Agency for International Development also has supplied architects, engineers, and specialists in teacher training and school planning. Total grants for education under the Alliance for Progress amounted to 6,789,000 dollars between fiscal year 1962 and 1967, although United States financial assistance has been greatly reduced during the past four years. Most of the 315,000 dollars committed in fiscal year 1967 was used to conduct a survey of higher education and to help the Ministry of Education plan an educational reform emphasizing the development of a comprehensive, multi-purpose, public secondary school program. One hundred million pesos in U. S. counterpart funds were allocated for education in 1967. Alliance for Progress aid also included work in agricultural education and extension, with assistance from the University of Nebraska, and advisors in educational administration, teacher education, and secondary education.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>U. S. Embassy, Briefing Paper on U. S. Economic Assistance, ca. 1968.

Foundations. The Ford and Rockefeller Foundations have made substantial contributions to various universities in money, scholarships, experts, and equipment. The Ford Foundation has made large grants to the University of Los Andes to encourage preparation of undergraduate engineers and the development of programs in the arts and sciences. It is also aiding the University of Antioquia in teacher training and general development. The National University is receiving assistance in library development and in the field of sociology, while Javeriana University has benefitted in basic sciences and teacher education. The University del Valle received funds for science, engineering, general development, and graduate programs in industrial management. The Colombian Association of Faculties of Medicine received money for research and population studies.<sup>25</sup>

The Cooperative Agricultural Program in Colombia is one of the Rockefeller Foundation's major national efforts. With the collaboration of the Ministry of Agriculture it is evolving into a hemispheric center for research and education. This Ministry also created in 1962 the Colombian Institute of Agriculture (ICA), which the following year was granted nationwide responsibility for agricultural research and extension. A post-graduate school of agriculture is to be set up by ICA in collaboration with the National University. Rockefeller Foundation staff members have served as heads of plant and animal science at the University, and funds are available for teaching and research. Students from Ecuador and several Central American countries participate in in-service programs. The focus of the Rockefeller program is primarily on research. There remains a

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<sup>25</sup> Ford Foundation, Annual Report, 1967, New York: Ford Foundation, n.d., p. 121.

need for considerable rural extension work. In ten rural communities studied just prior to 1963, not one farmer, except in the coffee region and the Valle del Cauca, reported a government extension worker as a source of agricultural information. Although the Colombian Institute of Agriculture was established to overcome these difficulties, the availability of trained personnel is too limited to expect this program to have much impact for many years.<sup>26</sup>

Peace Corps. Colombia was the first Latin American country to receive Peace Corps volunteers. The first group, assigned in September, 1961, consisted of 61 men serving in community development. By the fall of 1963, there were more than 400 volunteers in Colombia, 50 of whom were in agricultural extension, 45 in secondary education, 25 in physical education, and 25 in university work. The remainder at that time were in community development and public health activities. Since 1965, there have always been more than 500 volunteers in active service. Many of the later volunteers participated as producers and coordinators of educational television for the elementary schools. About 700 were in service in 1967 in a wide variety of activities. A Peace Corps girl taught the first course ever offered at the University of Antioquia's new campus at Medellin, which opened in 1967.

Much of the Peace Corps community development work is done in conjunction with the Colombian government's division of community development, which in turn often contracts its work to the semi-official National Federation of Coffee Growers and the Cauca Valley Corporation. In each of the villages where volunteers are working, they are supplied with a promotor,

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<sup>26</sup> Havens, op. cit., p. 17.

who serves as the Colombian counterpart of the Volunteer. Frequently, the Volunteer is also assisted by a developer (mejoradora) who works with housewives teaching cooking, sewing, child care, etc.<sup>27</sup>

The Colombo-American Linguistic Institute (ILCA) has trained more than a thousand Colombian teachers of English in language skills and teaching techniques since 1962. Teachers who complete the course are advanced a year in the escalafón. United States specialists planned the program and Peace Corps Volunteers taught the courses in 11 regional centers. Similar Peace Corps training was begun in 1965 for secondary teachers of mathematics, biology, and physics.<sup>28</sup> In physics alone, an estimated 800 teachers have been trained, mostly in vacation programs.

Organization of American States. The Organization of American States (OAS) conducts a number of Inter-American programs which are located in Colombia. These include: (1) the Inter-American Housing and Planning Center (CINVA) in Bogota, which provides research and specialist training in housing and city planning, (2) an annual course in methods of implementing agrarian reform as an aspect of economic and social development, conducted by the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences of San José, Costa Rica, (3) a program of training and research in Inter-American standardization to accelerate economic integration, with particular reference to iron and steel products, textiles, beverages, and food enterprises, (4) the Inter-American Library School in Medellin, which provides training in library science to students from many Latin American

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<sup>27</sup> Holt, op. cit., p. 153.

<sup>28</sup> Charles B. Neff, "A New Approach to Teacher Training in Colombia," International Education and Cultural Exchange, pp. 31-34, Summer, 1967.

countries, and (5) the Andrés Bello Center, which functions in conjunction with Bogota's Caro y Cuervo Institute in the study of Spanish-American philology and linguistics, with advisory and financial support from the Organization of American States.<sup>29</sup>

Unesco. The United Nations and Unesco provide aid to Colombian education in a number of ways. The most common has been the provision of specialists in a wide variety of fields, such as physics, mathematics, statistics, and school administration and inspection. More specifically, they provided an expert to help organize the faculty of sociology at the National University and two experts to serve at the normal school at Pamplona in 1963 and 1964. During that same period various agencies of the United Nations decided to invest 5,000,000 dollars in education, including (in part) preparation of engineers at the Industrial University of Santander, agricultural research at the University del Valle, and engineering training at the National University.<sup>30</sup> International Labor Organization aid from the Special Fund of the United Nations has been used to equip the shops of the National Apprenticeship Service. The World Health Organization has also assisted educational programs of the Ministry of Health.

The Colombian government regularly requests Unesco to provide educational experts in selected fields. For example, in 1968, assistance was being provided in educational planning, elementary teacher training, scientific research activities, and secondary school organization. The Special Fund of the United Nations also provides assistance in the fields

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<sup>29</sup> Pan American Union, Highlights . . ., op. cit., p. 14.

<sup>30</sup> Gómez, Memoria del Ministro de Educación Nacional, Vol. I., op. cit., pp. 51-52.

of university instruction in chemistry and engineering and of middle-level education in agriculture. UNICEF provides technical information to help train elementary teachers. The Colombian government selects the teachers, and Unesco provides them expense-paid, in-service training during vacations. In these and many other ways, educators in Colombia become aware of some of the best educational ideas from the rest of the world.

## CHAPTER 14

### SUCCESES, PROBLEMS, PROSPECTS

#### Successes and Stresses

Many remarkable achievements may be credited to Colombian education during the past decade, despite the fact that Colombia has just begun to emerge from an agrarian past rent by regionalism and extremes of political unrest and civil violence to become one of the most rapidly industrializing nations of Latin America. These achievements are particularly significant because so many of them were wrought by members of the Colombian elite, many of whom shared an appreciation of the need to remold the nation's human resources if a vigorous and modern nation was to be constructed.

Much of this recent success is the fruit of a sustained effort to encourage Colombians to study the ideas and practices of other nations. From this experience emerged a widening consensus that much might be done to improve economic and social conditions for all Colombians. In education, for example, some of the better-known manifestations of Colombian ingenuity at work in this novel venture are the foreign study programs of ICETEX, the planning and coordination efforts of the National Association of Universities, the vocational training activities of the National Apprenticeship Service, and the fundamental education work of Acción Cultural Popular.

To be sure, Colombia has always had to its credit some educational and cultural marks of distinction. From the dedicated teaching of the early

religious orders to the thorough research of the Botanical Expedition and, later, to the public education enthusiasm of Dámaso Zapata and to the popular zeal of today's universities, distinguished Colombians have been actively concerned with education. Rightly acclaimed for the quality of their contributions have been institutions such as the Gimnasio Moderno secondary school under Augustín Nieto Caballero, the University of Los Andes, and other institutions, both public and private. There is much about Colombian education that is already outstanding.

That the present push for rapid development should have come about is all the more remarkable when one considers that Colombia remains a deeply divided and fragmented society. Not only are there the usual upper and lower class social extremes so common in Latin America, but there is rural-urban discrimination, and for many Colombians, regional loyalties still take precedence over national ones. This has led to a curious but understandable division of responsibility between locality and nation -- a characteristic which has both helped and hindered educational progress. This division has helped by creating a climate of permissiveness in which a plethora of institutions of higher education have flourished. At the same time, in the elementary and secondary schools, attempts to impose a high degree of regulation without sufficient power of enforcement and financial support has limited the national government's ability to extend elementary education to a neglected fourth of the population. In fact, funds for education allocated by the national government are too frequently used for other purposes by local governments. Consequently, nominal national regulation of education in departmental and municipal schools may stifle rather than stimulate educational effort in some regions. Politics often make inroads in teacher morale.

Although authority is centralized in the Ministry of Education, in practice responsibility is diffused among various semi-autonomous agencies. Hopefully, a decree of July, 1968 will introduce greater organizational coherence into the various national ministries. Yet the struggle between national liberalism and local conservatism, between a strong central government and local autonomy continues to have repercussions, usually to the detriment of educational improvement. Although an able and energetic national president has been a magnificent asset, the task remains a formidable one.

#### Problems and Possibilities

The feature of Colombian education which most disturbs the observer from an economically developed nation is the still extremely limited educational opportunity afforded the laboring and peasant classes. Not only do schools for them remain in short supply, but the instruction available to them is not clearly relevant to the life which most of their children will certainly lead. Rather, from the earliest grades, schooling is directed toward the preparation of a socially respectable ideal citizen. The more attainable but less valued goal of immediate vocational and personal betterment for those who will never complete enough formal schooling ever to approximate the ruling class ideal education still receives only half-hearted attention.

Few would deny that the social expectations of a nation are reflected in its educational institutions. For many Colombians, a small and well-qualified elite, aided by a few of the most talented from the lower classes, represent a reasonable and viable social order. However, those school-inculcated academic values which provide social and economic security for the modestly affluent urban dweller or rural patron are virtually meaningless to the peasant who stands only the tiniest chance of living the cherished life style proffered by the present school.

Actually, Colombian schools serve the personal and professional ambitions of the upper and middle classes quite well because they provide cultural content and attitudes which are prized in influential circles and thus help to advance their status in society; the same instruction, even if effectively imparted, is too remote from relevance to the daily lives of small farmers and workers to evoke their interest and excitement. In fact, if their rate of failure and dropout is an indication, schools actually may be a major force for the creation of mass discouragement and disinterest in learning. When the schools fail to capture the imagination of the masses, it seems obvious that the present education must be modified if it is to become really relevant at Colombia's present level of development. And who, if not the peasant parents themselves, know what kind of learning is of most immediate relevance to their condition? Yet to permit impoverished and poorly educated parents to determine the kind of schooling their children shall receive seems to invite the formation of a self-conscious proletariat, proud of its indigenous origin and soon to clamor for a greater share of national power. At the same time, to deny to the lower class schooling which is culturally relevant to their condition is to encourage by default the emergence of an undisciplined and restless mass which may become even less rational while it continues to grow in its rejection of the mores of stable, organized society. Hence, it would seem a desirable policy to encourage peasants to found their own educational institutions, with their own curricula, or at least to permit them to guide the cultural and practical emphasis of schools which their children attend.

Although Colombian society is often democratic in theory, in practice it tends to be hierarchical and authoritarian. The present government's

educational enterprise is, in general, intelligently conceived to set forth systematically for all the wisdom of the cultured including as beneficiaries those of the lesser orders with the wit to profit from the experience. But what about pupils who show little promise of mastering the substance and forms of the traditional wisdom? There are schools designed to teach vocations, but there is a strong element of charity expressed in the feeble support which they receive. So often, vocational instruction is provided for students in need of assistance but offered skimpily as if they did not really merit it. Consequently many such programs in the schools are not really adequate at all but are rather merely symbolic gestures which recognize but fall short of satisfying the need.

Traditional Colombian values and Roman Catholicism are often indistinguishable. Colombian Catholicism finds its justification in hierarchical distinctions, and this view implies the reasonableness of higher social status for some than for others. The creed accords high status to intellectual knowledge, and schools have the responsibility of providing this knowledge. But of equal importance is the fact that schools also are charged with responsibility for identifying those pupils who are most deserving of status and rejecting those less qualified. Most teachers are not concerned primarily with guaranteeing all their pupils an equal status in society. In more egalitarian societies, such an educational philosophy is reversed, and there schools usually strive to provide the greatest stimulation to those least able to cope with the demands of life. For a great many Colombians the effort to extend such opportunity even to the most wanting seems ill-advised, unnatural and wasteful -- especially when resources are in short supply. Talent is identified, not created, many believe, for man's nature is eternal and essentially unchanging. Under

these circumstances, there is neither a strong moral nor logical argument in favor of extending social opportunity for all in the form of mass education. Charity is the principal moral mandate which justifies assistance to the underprivileged classes and charity is limited in concept to largesse conferred by a superior to an inferior and is not expected to produce self reliant, independent citizens with a strong social identity of their own.

This is not to suggest that these aspects of Catholic doctrine in Colombia are not susceptible to other interpretations, nor does it imply that all church and civil leaders lack authentic democratic convictions. But the predominating value consensus among those responsible for influencing decisions, and indeed among the masses themselves, is implicitly unsympathetic to popular democracy. For this reason, the proposed placing of control of schools in the hands of virtually unlettered peasants is regarded by most well-meaning Colombians as utter nonsense and is regarded by others as potentially dangerous. But until the local peasants are given responsibility for determining how to employ the best of their own tradition, however, impoverished it may seem to outsiders, rural and working class schools will not become an important force for transforming the quality of life for the majority of Colombia's people.

Certainly local control of schools is not necessarily a virtue in itself. Obviously, the more sophisticated wisdom of the universities, of the established society, and of the religious and secular culture must be interpreted in the schools. But until the peasant is permitted to examine the best of his own tradition in institutions addressed to his condition, he is unlikely ever to become intellectually competent enough as a human being to enjoy the wisdom of the higher culture, let alone correct the deficiencies of his own.

While the national government might be inclined to speed development of a system of peasant schools by official imposition, it seems likely that, if it does so in a bureaucratic manner it may diminish the school's authenticity and relevance by the premature introduction of new notions before the indigenous society fully appreciates the valuable features of its own tradition. An efficacious beginning might be to offer grants-in-aid or loans to any bona fide peasant group or cooperative which cares enough about education to employ its own teacher. Or government might advance loans to pupils or partial subsidies based on average daily attendance to schools, supplemented with all-expense scholarships to outstanding pupils who wish to transfer into the regular schools. Externally administered tests, under the supervision of authorities outside the local community, could be used to permit transfer at an advanced level into schools observing the national curriculum. By offering a wide range of practical and academic choices, these tests could be used to vastly extend the range of useful knowledge and skills which might be taught in peasant schools while assuring the superior ability of children who transfer into conventional schools. After all, even a poorly supported school which tries to relate itself directly to the working-class child's practical needs is -- for him -- more effective than one remote from his own personal life experience, to say nothing of this kind of education's being vastly superior than no schooling at all. These proposals are based on the assumption that in Colombia the poor, the lowly and the humble will continue to be held in low esteem. Tractable, docile, inexpensive workers are always useful so long as the state of technology remains simple.

At the same time, it is not at all clear to many Colombians that the existing elementary school is making a significant contribution to the

formation of a productive and orderly citizenry. It may produce a spirit of dissatisfaction and unrest, and an accelerated migration of ill-trained workers to urban areas, as well as create a sense of frustration among its numerous dropouts. Without a clearer respect for the needs of its lower class learners, the traditional elementary school is unlikely to win the allegiance of most of its present pupils except at a greatly increased financial expense. If it is to be done at minimal cost, perhaps the best course is to allow the lower classes sufficient curricular freedom to devise their own educational salvation -- a salvation which will gradually lead to the replacement of the nationalism of the elite in favor of a nationalism of the common man. A truly native authenticity and practicality in the primary school may lead in time to a gradual merger of the two ways of life in the emerging Institutes of Middle Education. A further combination of the Institutes' effort with SENA's technical training programs would enormously speed the incorporation of peasant and laboring classes into the mainstream of Colombia's industrial development.

At present Colombia is not a country where education really matters; that is to say it is not a society where skills developed in school are expected to yield many direct vocational and economic advantages to the learner. Persons with school-acquired competencies do not share the relatively open access to employment opportunity enjoyed by their peers in more industrialized societies. Friendship ties, family, and political connections are more essential to obtain and keep suitable employment than the mere possession of school developed skills. In a still largely non-technical society, employers are not accustomed to think of educated employees as possessing particular skills which are economically valuable,

but rather as individuals fitted to perform almost any job appropriate to the status that schooling has conferred upon them. Too often school-conferred status has diminished rather than enhanced the practical service that an overtrained employee might render, because of its tendency to limit the range of socially acceptable tasks that he may be asked to perform.

Often it is inexpedient for employers to assign responsible positions to persons merely because they are educationally qualified. Better to employ a less able individual who may placate a friend or customer, or who is loyal (or at least cheap, or docile) than a highly trained individual who may be likely to carry business secrets to a competitor as he advances in his career. Thus, job assignments may call for obligations to the employer which those who are merely competent cannot fulfill. This is especially true in a society where the stranger is not readily trusted. While education might strive to modify these cultural patterns, it is a problem which requires more than mere schooling for its solution.

### Prospects

What are the prospects for the future? The body of this work identifies many of the solutions which Colombians have proposed for their educational problems, and many positive changes already are underway. Several recent ones stand out. These include:

- (1) Reduction in length of the elementary school day, to permit expansion of the present system at little additional cost, and the introduction of the complete five year rural elementary school.
- (2) The large scale introduction of Institutes of Middle Education to make academic and practical secondary education more accessible to the growing urban population.

- (3) The introduction of more university-level degree short courses to train skilled technicians and intermediate level professionals.
- (4) The adoption of credit and elective features in many of the nation's largest universities, along with better integration of diverse faculties into a unified university structure. The credit system will encourage impecunious dropouts to resume their studies at a later date, while a system of electives will introduce more flexibility and creativity into the system. Integration of faculties has already led to important economies and more balanced planning.

These are positive remedies and, if incorporated into a national plan, they immediately would increase the relevance of schooling for many Colombians. But elementary education still lags behind. Youth in the direst straits generally receive the least practical benefit from their schooling, and pupils with the greatest deficiencies generally have the poorest teachers. In the teacher salary schedule, time servers still rise to the highest levels, despite deficient preparation. And nearly all schools must adhere to the designated stages of the official curriculum, even though the vast majority of pupils complete only a tiny fraction of it.

Finally, acceptance into the profession of teaching needs to be based more than at present upon merit rather than on political or social affiliation. Fortunately, a host of Colombian educational leaders stand fully aware that matters such as these demand their fullest attention before a still more exciting era of national transformation can begin.

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